

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Rocky Mount Central City Historic District

Boundary Increase and Decrease and Additional Documentation

Rocky Mount, Nash and Edgecombe Counties, ED0905 and NS1212, Listed 8/27/2009

Nomination by Heather Fearnbach

Photographs by Heather Fearnbach, September and December 2008



200 Block of Ivy Street looking north, boundary increase



Memorial Hospital, 224 Rose Street, boundary increase



Fire Engine Company No. 2, 404 South Church Street, boundary increase



Carlton House Motor Inn and Restaurant, 209-215 North Church Street, contributing resource

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Rocky Mount Central City Historic District Boundary Increase, Boundary Decrease, and Additional Documentation

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Portions of twenty-six blocks on Main, Washington, Church, Battle, Hammond, Hill, Howard, Ivy, Gay, Goldleaf, and Thomas Streets; Albemarle, Atlantic, Sunset, and Western Avenues; Falls Road; and Sorsby's Alley **N/A** not for publication

city or town Rocky Mount **N/A** vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Nash and Edgecombe code 127 zip code 27802
065

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined eligible for the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Rocky Mount Central City Historic District Boundary Increase,
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Name of Property

Nash and Edgecombe Counties, NC

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
27	5	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
27	5	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

195

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Business

COMMERCE/TRADE: Professional

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

COMMERCE/TRADE: Department Store

FUNERARY: Funeral Home

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC: Secondary Structure

GOVERNMENT: Fire Station

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Business

COMMERCE/TRADE: Professional

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

RECREATION/CULTURE: Museum

FUNERARY: Funeral Home

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC: Secondary Structure

GOVERNMENT: Fire Station

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

Commercial Style

Gothic Revival

Art Deco

Modern Movement

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

CONCRETE

STONE

roof ASPHALT

RUBBER

other SYNTHETICS: Vinyl

WOOD: Plywood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Commerce
Ethnic Heritage: Black

Period of Significance

1930-1961 (Additional documentation)

1895-1961 (Boundary Increase)

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal Agency
- ☐ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository: Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill;
Braswell Library, Rocky Mount

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Nash and Edgecombe Counties, NC

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 10 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>247900</u>	<u>3981820</u>	Boundary Increase	3	<u>18</u>	<u>248060</u>	<u>3981620</u>	BD
	Zone	Easting	Northing			Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	<u>18</u>	<u>247940</u>	<u>3981740</u>	Boundary Decrease	4	<u>18</u>	<u>248260</u>	<u>3981520</u>	BI

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Heather Fearnbach
organization Fearnbach History Services, Inc. date 12/23/08
street & number 3334 Nottingham Road telephone 336-765-2661
city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27104

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name More than fifty
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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Section 5. Classification

Number of Resources within Property (continued)

The resource count shown on the NPS form relates to the properties within the boundary expansion area.
The boundary decrease areas include thirty-one resources.

Section 6. Function or Use (continued)

Historic Function

HEALTH CARE: Hospital
RELIGION: Religious Facility
TRANSPORTATION: Rail-related
TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

Current Function

RELIGION: Religious Facility
TRANSPORTATION: Rail-related
TRANSPORTATION: Road-related
VACANT/NOT IN USE

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Section 7. Narrative Description

The city of Rocky Mount, population 58,000, is located in northeastern North Carolina at the junction of three major highways: US 64, US 301, and Interstate 95. The Central City Historic District contains the most cohesive collection of historic commercial and industrial buildings at Rocky Mount's geographic center, as well as significant adjacent religious, institutional, and residential buildings. The district flanks the railroad, which serves as the Nash/Edgecombe county line. Rocky Mount's west side is in Nash County; the east side in Edgecombe County.

Although Rocky Mount is so named due to the rock outcroppings at the Falls of the Tar River, the city's topography is generally flat. Streets are laid out in a grid pattern, but North Washington Street and Falls Road cut across several blocks at a diagonal in the district's northern section, creating triangular-shaped parcels which are, in some cases, occupied by flatiron buildings. Main, Washington, and Church streets and Albemarle and Atlantic avenues serve as the district's primary north/south corridors. Intersecting east/west streets include Battle, Hammond, Ivy, Gay, Goldleaf, and Thomas. Other east/west streets change names at their junction with the railroad tracks. Nash County's Sunset Avenue becomes Tarboro Street in Edgecombe County, Western Avenue turns into Hill Street, and Nash Street becomes Marigold Street. Other street names change as they move north. Northwest Main Street turns into Falls Road north of Thomas Street. Howard Street, an alley behind the one hundred block of Southwest Main Street, becomes Sorsby's Alley north of Sunset Avenue.

The original Rocky Mount Central City Historic District, listed in the National Register in 1980, encompassed 205 resources constructed from the late nineteenth- through the mid-twentieth centuries. Most of the buildings within the district are commercial, and represent the predominant architectural types and styles commonly erected in North Carolina towns during this period. New businesses capitalized on manufacturing growth during Rocky Mount's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century economic boom and reflected their success in the construction of brick commercial buildings embellished with brick corbelling, arched windows, and cast-iron storefronts. Some downtown buildings incorporate elaborate Romanesque and Classical Revival design elements, but most are more simply detailed Commercial-style buildings of the early- to mid-twentieth century. Patterned masonry; sparingly-used tile, concrete, stone, or terra cotta insets; shaped parapets; and bands of large rectangular windows distinguish these otherwise austere commercial buildings.

This nomination expands and reduces the boundaries of the Rocky Mount Central City Historic District to reflect physical changes and an expanded period of significance. Since 1980, sixty-nine buildings within the original district boundaries have been demolished. Thirty-one of those buildings were on the district's

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edges, and the parcels where they once stood, most of which are now parking lots, are documented here as a boundary decrease. The most concentrated losses were at the district's northern end, where only two warehouses and two factory complexes related to the once-thriving tobacco industry still stand, and along Washington and Tarboro Streets, once completely lined with commercial buildings. The remaining thirty-eight demolished properties stood on substantially intact commercial blocks away from the edges of the original district boundaries.

The boundary expansion encompasses thirty-two properties on the district's edges: seven commercial buildings, eight dwellings, five outbuildings, four service stations, two churches, two funeral homes, Firestation No. 2, Union Bus Station, the Railway Express Agency Building, and Memorial Hospital. Some of these properties were constructed after the district's original period of significance, which ended in 1930. As this nomination also serves to expand the period of significance to 1961, these resources, as well as intact properties within the original boundaries constructed after 1930, reflect the continued development of Rocky Mount's commercial and industrial center. The majority of the expansion area's commercial buildings have a standard commercial form, although some exhibit stylistic influences ranging from Art Deco to Modernist. The two transportation-related buildings—the circa 1930 Railway Express Agency Building and the Modernist 1951 Union Bus Station—are located adjacent to the railroad at the district's south end. The Wilson architecture firm of Benton and Benton designed one of the expansion area's most architecturally-striking buildings, the Mediterranean Revival-style Fire Station No. 2, constructed by D. J. Rose at 404 S. Church Street in 1924. The austere 1937 Art Deco-style Memorial Hospital at 224 Rose Street has minimal cast stone embellishment.

The district expansion also includes two blocks just north of Rocky Mount's African American business district on East Thomas Street. These blocks, bounded by East Goldleaf Street on the north, Albemarle Avenue on the west, Atlantic Avenue on the east, and East Thomas Street on the south, contain residential, commercial, and religious buildings. Seven early twentieth-century dwellings stand on Ivy Street and Atlantic Avenue—a shotgun, a front-gable duplex, a bungalow, two Queen Anne cottages, and two vernacular two-story houses. Similar dwellings filled the blocks until the last quarter of the twentieth century, but these seven are the only survivors. W. T. Grimes and Sons opened a barber shop at 211 Ivy Street around 1958. Two Gothic Revival-style African American churches, the frame 1910s Holy Hope Episcopal Church at 200 Ivy Street and the brick St. John A. M. E. Zion Church at 250 Atlantic Avenue, completed in 1963, occupy corner lots.

The expansion area's southwestern boundary extends to encompass the circa 1895 Summerlin House at 416 South Church Street. The two-story Queen Anne-style house is the only surviving dwelling constructed during Rocky Mount's 1890s boom period on Church Street, which was once an elite

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residential avenue lined with the large homes of leading citizens. The elaborate sawn and turned porch frieze, balustrade, and posts are among the most ornate Victorian-era porch elements in the city.

The overall Rocky Mount Central City Historic District, taking into account the boundary increase areas and period of significance update, contains 180 buildings and one object, seventy-seven percent of which are contributing. The boundary increase areas include twenty-seven primary resources and five secondary resources, ninety-three percent of which are contributing. The boundary decrease areas include thirty-one demolished resources.

Building rhythm and massing is regular throughout the district, as most buildings are brick, one or two stories tall, and situated close to concrete sidewalks. A few three-story buildings stand at key locations on Main Street. The five-story Rocky Mount National Bank building at 107 Southeast Main Street is the district's tallest edifice. Vacant lots and buildings that do not contribute to the downtown's historic character due to age or loss of integrity are excluded from the district whenever possible, resulting in an irregular district boundary that conforms to the property lines of contributing buildings and streetscapes.

Inventory List

The inventory list is divided into three sections. The first—a revised inventory list for all the buildings within the original 1980 historic district, excluding the boundary decrease areas—encompasses the following categories:

- A. Resources re-classified from “intrusive” or “contributing with some reservations” to contributing because they were constructed during the expanded period of significance and retain integrity
- B. Resources re-classified from “intrusive” or “contributing with some reservations” to contributing due to reevaluation based on additional information
- C. Resources that were omitted from the original district inventory list
- D. Resources re-classified from “contributing,” “contributing with some reservations,” or “intrusive” to noncontributing due to a loss of integrity
- E. Demolished resources within the 1980 historic district's core area. These properties are noted on the district map by the address number followed by an “X” in vacant lots. (This category does not include the demolished resources in the decrease areas.)

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F. Address corrections

G. New construction since 1980 (noncontributing resources)

No change = no change in a resource's contributing or noncontributing status

The property status code is included in the header for each inventory entry.

The second section—boundary increase—includes properties that are being added to the Rocky Mount Central City Historic District. The final section—boundary decrease—includes buildings on the outer edges of the district that have been demolished since the district was listed in the National Register. They were therefore excluded from the revised district boundaries. Demolished or heavily altered buildings within the original district's core area cannot be removed according to National Register regulations, as the district was listed prior to December 13, 1980.¹

Properties are arranged alphabetically by street name within each section. Street addresses are listed in ascending order. Vacant and parking lots are noted but not included in the overall property count.

Each historic property in the inventory is assigned a name, where possible, based on the first-known and/or a long-term occupant. Most information about these early tenants comes from the *Rocky Mount City Directories* (1908-1965) located at the Braswell Library in Rocky Mount and the Wilson Library at UNC-Chapel Hill. The 1930 city directory is the first to include listings by street address. Directories are sporadic through 1960 and available for almost every year after that date. The date or approximate date of construction and the date or dates of any major alterations or additions follow the property name. Dates of construction are based on Sanborn Company maps (published in 1885, 1891, 1896, 1901, 1907, 1912, 1917, 1923, 1949, and 1956), historic photographs, Edgecombe and Nash County property record cards, interviews with local residents, city directory research, newspaper articles, and the building's style and form.

¹ "According to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended [Section 101(a)(1)] and National Register regulations [36 CFR 60.15(b) and 15(a)(1)], properties listed prior to December 13, 1980, can be removed from the Register only if they have ceased to meet the Criteria for Evaluation because the qualities which caused them to be originally listed have been lost or destroyed. In this connection, no portion of these "grandfathered" National Register properties can be removed from the National Register as part of a boundary reduction unless it has lost the qualities that caused the properties to be originally listed." "Boundary Increases/Decreases,"

<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/01workshop/letter.htm>, accessed on April 9, 2009.

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Each resource is designated as contributing or noncontributing to the historic significance and integrity of the district. The evaluations are based on age and degree of alteration. Buildings constructed in or before 1961 are considered contributing if they retain architectural and historic integrity from the period of significance. Contributing resources must retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Noncontributing buildings postdate 1961 or were built before 1961 and have been heavily altered, and therefore have lost their architectural and historical integrity. With eighty percent of its 186 resources categorized as contributing, the Rocky Mount Central City Historic District retains a good degree of integrity.

Original District

The following inventory list serves to update the status of the properties within the Rocky Mount Central City Historic District listed in 1980.

Albemarle Avenue, East Side

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, Contributing Building, Code C 131 Albemarle Avenue

One-story brick commercial building with three storefronts, all of which have been altered. The northernmost storefront has been infilled with brick, the central storefront with a roll-up garage door, and the southern storefront with two roll-up garage doors.

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change 161-165 Albemarle Avenue

One-story brick commercial building said to have been constructed as a blacksmith shop and livery stable. Corbelled arches surmount the window and southern entrance openings. The openings had been altered with brick infill and the installation of two roll-up garage doors by 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change 169-171 Albemarle Avenue

One-story brick commercial building with a corbelled cornice and two storefronts, both of which had been altered by 1980.

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Albemarle Avenue, West Side

Stokes Mortuary Warehouse, ca. 1940, Contributing Building, Code C 210 Albemarle Avenue

One-story, frame, gable-front warehouse with metal siding, a metal roof, and a sliding garage door on the east elevation. A metal awning and concrete steps provide access to the south elevation. Stokes Mortuary owns the warehouse, which extends from the Booker-T Theater's east elevation towards Albemarle Street.

An auto repair shop stood at this location in 1923, and the 1930 city directory lists James Stevenson, a blacksmith, at this address. In 1936 the site is vacant; it appears that the current building was constructed by 1940, when the Stokes Funeral Parlor garage is listed at this address. The city directory listing remains the same through the 1960s. The building is labeled "casket storage" on the 1949 and 1956 updates to the 1923 Sanborn map.

Vacant Lot

Vacant Lot

Vacant Lot

Vacant Lot

North Church Street, East Side

Coastal Texaco Service Station, ca. 1965, Demolished Building, Code E 201 N. Church Street

Carleton House Motor Inn and Restaurant, 1961, Contributing Building, Codes A and F 209-215 N. Church Street

This building had a 213-219 N. Church Street address in the 1980 nomination.

The Carleton House Motor Inn and Restaurant encompassed a two-story motel with a lounge, conference room, shop, restaurant, and forty-five rooms arranged around a central court and a one-story restaurant. A

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porte cochere shelters the office entrance; flat-roofed metal canopies connect the buildings. A metal fence now surrounds the complex, which currently functions as a North Carolina Wesleyan College student dormitory.

The Carleton House Motor Inn and Restaurant opened on April 2, 1961. A Rocky Mount *Evening Telegram* article published that day declared that the complex featured the “most up-to-date ideas in modern motel construction.” Architects Shield and Wyatt designed the buildings, which are constructed of recycled variegated brick supplied by the Tar River Lumber Company. Mr. and Mrs. Carleton Noell of Rocky Mount and Mr. and Mrs. Kay Kyser of Chapel Hill funded the five-hundred-thousand-dollar construction and furnishing cost. Rocky Mount residents Nick and Mayo Boddie served as the first managers.

The Boddie and Noell families subsequently incorporated as Boddie-Noell and were one of the first, and eventually the largest, Hardee’s fast-food restaurant franchise owners.² Rocky Mount native Kay Kyser had a successful career as an entertainer, leading the Kay Kyser Band from 1935 through the late 1940s, appearing in movies, and hosting a television program before retiring from the industry in 1950. Kyser and his wife, former model and singer Georgia Carroll, then returned to North Carolina, where he devoted his time to philanthropic activities and religious study, becoming a Christian Science practitioner in 1961.³

**Church of the Good Shepherd, 1877, 1924, 1960, 1997, Contributing Building, Code F
231 N. Church Street**

This building had a 225 N. Church Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Rocky Mount’s Parish of the Good Shepherd was formally organized in 1874 and initially met in various downtown buildings. The congregation soon raised funds for a permanent place of worship, however, and Taylor and Beal of Whitakers constructed a frame sanctuary, breaking ground in June 1876 and finishing in time for the Easter service on April 1, 1877. The building was brick-veneered by 1896 and renovated in 1909, at which time the façade belltower was added. A parish hall was constructed on the rear (east) elevation in 1924, and a second parish hall was added to the south elevation of the 1924 building in 1960. These buildings now serve as a day school, office space, and meeting rooms, as a larger

² Carole Marsh, *The Hardee's Heritage: The past, present, and future* (Rocky Mount: Walker Ross Printing Company, 1976), 3.

³ “Kay Kyser,” <http://www.kaykysercsassoc.org>, accessed on April 28, 2009.

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parish hall was constructed north of the 1924 building in 1997. An arched cloister connects the parish hall to the sanctuary.⁴

New York interior decorator Harold Rambusch, whose family firm, Rambusch Decorating Company, designed church, theater, and hotel interiors throughout the United States, directed the sanctuary interior renovation in the 1940s. The altar wall was painted a deep red and stenciled with gold leaf fleur-de-lis; the remaining plaster walls cream with Bible verses in red and black script. The stained glass windows and light fixtures were also installed as part of the renovation. Replacement pews and a new organ have been added since that time.⁵

Parking Lot

Hardee's Drive-In # 1, 1962, Demolished Building, Code E 321 N. Church Street

This property had a 320 N. Church Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Rocky Mount Veterans Memorial at Jack Laughery Park, 2007, Noncontributing Object, Code G 321 N. Church Street

The City of Rocky Mount worked with a citizen's committee to develop plans for a veterans memorial on the site of the former Hardee's #1. The Rocky Mount Veterans Memorial at Jack Laughery Park is a lasting tribute to all who have served in the United States Armed Forces. The project is a joint effort of the City of Rocky Mount, local veterans, and friends of Jack Laughery.

The memorial includes a series of five stone columns, commemorating each branch of the armed forces. The park has a water feature, park benches, and flagpoles for the colors of the nation, state, and city. Customized lighting and landscaping creates a meditative setting for visitors. The City officially unveiled the memorial and park at a special dedication ceremony on Veteran's Day, November 11, 2007.⁶

⁴ "A Brief Outline of the History of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Timeline Format," Hospitality Host Packet, June 12, 2008, on file at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Rocky Mount.

⁵ Lawrence Goering, conversation with Heather Fearnbach, September 9, 2008.

⁶ Rocky Mount Veterans Memorial at Jack Laughery Park, City of Rocky Mount website, <http://www.rockymountnc.gov/parks/memorial.html>, accessed December 2008.

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Ray's Union 76 Service Center, 1957, Contributing Building, Code A
331 N. Church Street

Located sentinel-like where North Church Street merges into Main, this former gas station reflects the post-World War II transformation of Church Street from a once-prestigious residential avenue into a commercial strip. The concrete block two-bay garage is veneered in porcelain-enameled steel and topped by a pylon to alert passing motorists. The office, which extends from the north elevation, has glass curtain walls. The gas station opened at this strategic site in 1957 and originally sold Pure Oil products.⁷

North Church Street, West Side

Mangum's Warehouse, ca. 1924, Contributing Building, No Change
218 N. Church Street

One-story brick tobacco warehouse built for Irvin W. Mangum. Multiple garage bays and entrances originally provided access to the warehouse from the Church Street façade; most were infilled with brick by 1980. A corbelled cornice and buttresses embellish the otherwise plain façade. The long building extends all the way to Franklin Street. Numerous loading docks and metal industrial sash pierce the north and west elevations; regularly spaced windows line the east elevation. A corbelled cornice wraps around the warehouse, which is sheltered by a metal roof.

Summergrade and Sons, ca. 1910, Demolished Building, Codes C and E
300 N. Church Street

Parking Lot

South Church Street, East Side

Christian Science Church, ca. 1901, Contributing Building, No Change
213 S. Church Street

One-story, buff-colored brick, Gothic Revival-style church constructed for a Methodist congregation and sold to the Christian Science Church circa 1925. The cross-gable-roofed church has a corner belltower with a pyramidal steeple, oculus windows, and a double-leaf entrance surmounted by a pointed-arch,

⁷ Richard L. Mattson, Nash County survey file entry, 1985.

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stained-glass transom. Pointed-arch windows illuminate the sanctuary, which was remodeled in the 1970s. Board-and-batten siding sheathes the upper portions of each gable. Small brick additions extend from the southeast and northeast corners.

Station Square, ca. 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Code G 301 S. Church Street

Station Square encompasses the extant commercial buildings in the 300 block of Southwest Main Street and the 100 block of Nash Street. The primary South Church Street entrance has a classical portico supported by robust columns.

The block bounded by Southwest Main, Nash, South Church, and Coastline Streets once contained additional commercial buildings fronting Nash, South Church, and Coastline Streets, and the Rocky Mount Sanitarium on Coastline Street, all of which have been demolished since 1980. This area is now a large parking lot.

Coastline Street

Atlantic Coastline Railroad Station, 1903-1916, 2000, Contributing Building, Code F 100 Coastline Street

The train station had a 101 Hammond Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Three-story brick Romanesque-style railroad station constructed in 1903 at a cost of \$13,344.77. The building initially had a two-story central section flanked by one-story wings. A second story was added to each wing in 1911-12 and a third story in 1916. Originally an Atlantic Coast Line Station, the building later served the Seaboard Coast Line. The building was rehabilitated from 1997 to 2000 and continues to serve as Rocky Mount's train station.

Falls Road, East Side

Loading Platform, ca. 1950, Contributing Structure, Code C 251 Falls Road

Long loading platform with a metal gable roof supported by triangular steel I-beams and a concrete floor and ramp. Located on the west side of the railroad tracks.

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Sanborn maps illustrate that D. J. Rose's building supply warehouse and a loading platform stood on the west side of the railroad tracks from 1912 through 1956.

Cobb & Carlton Warehouse #2, ca. 1920, Demolished Building, Code E 301 Falls Road

Commercial Building, ca. 1915, 1945, Noncontributing Building, Code C 313 Falls Road

This one-story brick building is one of two survivors of the commercial and industrial complex that stood at this location for most of the twentieth century. The original district inventory list includes the no-longer-extant Cobb and Carlton Warehouse No. 2 at 301 Falls Road and the Thorpe and Rick, Inc. tobacco warehouse at 315-325 (now 349) Falls Road, but does not enumerate this building, which served a variety of commercial functions.

The building, which now has a 313 Falls Road address, is executed in five-to-one common bond. Two recessed entrances provide access to the building. The façade has been altered by the application of brick veneer, perhaps when the building was remodeled to accommodate two businesses rather than three. An interior partition wall was removed between 1923 and 1949. The side and rear elevations have been painted and the storefronts have been bricked-up since 1980.

The 1923 Sanborn map illustrates that a one-story, three-part building stood at 309-313 Falls Road. City directories list 309 and 311 as vacant and Busy Bee Lunch in 313 in 1930. In 1936, Service Seafood Company is listed at 311 and Daniel's Cash Grocery at 313. In 1940, Red's Grocery is at 309 and Daniel's Cash Grocery at 311-313. By 1950, Daniel's Cash Grocery occupied the entire building. The business remained in operation through the 1960s.

Thorpe and Ricks, Inc., 1940s, Contributing Building, Codes A and F 349 Falls Road

This one-story brick building is one of two survivors of the commercial and industrial complex that stood at this location for most of the twentieth century. The complex had a 315-325 Falls Road address in the 1980 nomination. Thorpe and Ricks Tobacco, established in 1886, had a presence at this location beginning in the late nineteenth century. A three-and-a-half-story leaf tobacco warehouse and series of one-story buildings including a cooperage and a dry house appear on the April 1896 Sanborn map, the

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first to show this area. By 1912 the Thorpe and Ricks complex had been expanded, with a two-story addition erected on the north side of the warehouse, a one-story storage building constructed to the south, and a one-story warehouse built on the lot's east side. The cooper shop had been damaged by wind in 1912 and was moved to the new one-story storage building by 1917. Additions were constructed on the west, north, and east sides of the original warehouse by 1923, and by 1949 a large one-story receiving department replaced the one-story storage building, filling that space and the vacant area between the warehouse, which then functioned as a prizery, and the commercial building at 309-313 Falls Road.

The Thorpe and Ricks Receiving Department building originally had a 315 Falls Road address, but is now 349 Falls Road. The one-story brick building has a stepped parapet and a raised brick outline surrounding the sign band. The large garage bay at the façade's south end has been enclosed with concrete block and a shed-roofed entrance vestibule added at the façade's north end. A patio with a metal railing extends across the façade. Auxiliary entrances provide access to the south and east elevations.

Vacant Lot

Falls Road, West Side

Koretizing, Inc., ca. 1955, 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Code D 202-204 Falls Road

Brick commercial building with a two-story western section and a one-story eastern block with two corner entrances defined by permastone veneer. A dry cleaners and laundry operates out of this space as well as 206-210 Falls Road. Stucco and a wood-shingled, pent-roofed hood added since 1980 unifies the buildings.

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Code D 206 Falls Road

One-story brick commercial building that has been stuccoed and heavily altered since 1980. The storefront has been removed and the building encompassed by the dry cleaners and laundry at 202-204 Falls Road. A wood-shingled, pent-roofed hood added since 1980 unifies the buildings.

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Commercial Building, ca. 1920, 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Code D 208-210 Falls Road

One-story brick commercial building that has been stuccoed and heavily altered since 1980. The south storefront has been removed and the building encompassed by the dry cleaners and laundry at 202-204 Falls Road. A wood-shingled, pent-roofed hood added since 1980 unifies the buildings.

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Code D 224 Falls Road

One-story brick commercial building that has been heavily altered since 1980. The storefront has been replaced and plywood veneer and a wood-shingled pent-roofed hood installed across the facades of 224, 226, and 228 Falls Road.

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Codes D and F 226-228 Falls Road

One-story brick commercial building that has been heavily altered since 1980. The storefronts have been replaced and plywood veneer and a wood-shingled pent-roofed hood installed across the facades of 224, 226, and 228. This building had a 228 Falls Road address in the 1980 nomination.

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, Contributing Building, Code F 232-234 Falls Road

One-story brick commercial building with a pointed parapet and two storefronts, both of which have been enclosed with plywood paneling since 1980. The south storefront (232) is now a recessed entry to the Crown of Victory Church of Deliverance, Inc. This building had a 234 Falls Road address in the 1980 nomination.

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, Demolished Building, Code E 240-248 Falls Road

Sexton and Sons, Inc. Building, ca. 1919, Demolished Building, Code E 252-254 Falls Road

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Commercial Building, ca. 1930, Demolished Building, Code E
260 Falls Road

Tobacco Warehouse, ca. 1903, Demolished Building, Code E
272 Falls Road

Fenner Warehouse, ca. 1910, Demolished Building, Code E
296-298 Falls Road

Thomas Hackney Braswell Memorial Library, 1923, 1938, 1961, 1966, Contributing Building, No Change, 344 Falls Road

Architect G. R. Berryman of Columbia, South Carolina designed the 1923 section of the Thomas Hackney Braswell Memorial Library. Dr. Mark Russell Braswell donated the land and funds for the building's construction in memory of his son Thomas (1895-1907). The one-story, brick Classical Revival library features a pedimented entrance portico with limestone columns with Ionic capitals. Flanking wings and a large rear addition were constructed in 1938, followed by large wings on the east and west elevations in 1961, a children's library in 1966, and a small addition on the southeast corner and interior renovations in 1985.⁸

After flooding following Hurricane Floyd destroyed Rocky Mount's Children's Museum and Arts Center in September 1999, city council delineated the former Imperial Tobacco Company Processing Plant and the Thomas Hackney Braswell Memorial Library as the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences. The complex was subsequently rehabilitated to serve this new function. The Rocky Mount Historic Preservation Commission designated the Thomas Hackney Memorial Library a local landmark in 2004.

Gay Street, North Side

Imperial Tobacco Company Processing Plant, 1903-1923, Contributing Building, Code F
270 Gay Street

The Imperial Tobacco complex had a 205 McDonald Street address in 1980.

⁸ C. Rudolph Knight, "Thomas Hackney Braswell Memorial Library," Local Landmark Report, 2004, on file at the State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh.

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The Imperial Tobacco Company of Great Britain and Ireland established a Rocky Mount office in May 1902, hiring local tobacco factory owner E. W. Smith, as their branch manager. They soon began erecting a building on McDonald Street, the first in what would eventually become a seventeen-building complex. Wellford C. Reed, one of Imperial Tobacco's American managers, reported in a June 25, 1903 letter that "Our factories under construction at Wilson and Rocky Mount are nearly completed, and will be finished on time. These factories will be models, and represent ideas for economic handling as well as fire risks which have not hitherto been put into execution in the construction of factories for the purpose of handling tobacco." The Rocky Mount complex, which processed tobacco and packed it for shipment operated through the late 1960s.⁹

After flooding following Hurricane Floyd destroyed Rocky Mount's Children's Museum and Arts Center in September 1999, city council delineated the former Imperial Tobacco Company Processing Plant and the adjacent Thomas Hackney Braswell Memorial Library as the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences. The complex was subsequently rehabilitated to serve this new function. The Rocky Mount Historic Preservation Commission designated the Imperial Tobacco Processing Plant a local landmark in 2004.

East Goldleaf Street, North Side

American Tobacco Company, 1892, 1907, Contributing Building, No Change 222 E. Goldleaf Street

Brick tobacco processing and storage complex. A plaque inset in the corner of the two-story prizery reads "K. W. Coghill, Contractor & Builder, 1892," which would make this building the oldest existing tobacco processing plant in Rocky Mount. The company name changed ca. 1912 to British-American Tobacco and ca. 1917 to Export Leaf Tobacco.

⁹ C. Rudolph Knight, "Imperial Tobacco Company Processing Plant," Local Landmark Report, 2004, on file at the State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh.

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Howard Street, West Side

Commercial Building, ca. 1930, Contributing Building, No Change 110 Howard Street

This one-story stuccoed brick commercial building had a stepped parapet in 1980, but the parapet and portions of the stucco are now missing. Two large metal casement windows flank the replacement entrance.

Commercial Building, ca. 1930, Contributing Building, No Change 120 Howard Street

Two-story brick Colonial Revival office building with a pedimented portico supported by grouped Tuscan columns, an entrance flanked by sidelights and a transom, nine-over-nine sash, cast stone windows sills and keystones, and a denticulated cornice beneath a pent roof framed by stepped parapets.

Commercial Building, ca. 1930, Contributing Building, No Change 122 Howard Street

Two-story brick Art Deco-style commercial building with Carrera glass framing the storefront, which is sheltered by a flat-roofed metal canopy. The second story's central bay projects slightly and included a decorative brick panel over the metal casement window. Square cast stone panels are centered above the remaining four windows. The windows sills and coping are also cast stone.

Commercial Building, ca. 1930, 1960s, Noncontributing Building, Code D 124 Howard Street

One-story brick commercial building with two replacement 1960s Classical Revival-style storefronts. This building first appears on the 1949 updates to the 1923 Sanborn map.

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change 130-134 Howard Street

Two-story brick commercial building with two storefronts and corbelled cornices. Raised brick courses outline decorative panels and the arched second-story window openings. Both storefronts had been altered by 1980.

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Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change 138-142 Howard Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a stepped parapet and two storefronts. A raised brick course outlines the second-story window openings. Both buildings had metal cornices over the storefronts in 1980; only the cornice of 142 survives. Both storefronts had been altered by 1980; the storefront of 138 has since been boarded up, along with the second-story windows.

Evening Telegram, ca. 1960, Noncontributing Building, Code D 146-154 Howard Street

Two-story brick commercial building with three storefronts, all of which were altered by 1980, when the building served as the Rocky Mount Evening and Sunday Telegram offices. Ribbed metal sheathing and a louvered metal screen cover the second story; a flat-roofed metal canopy shelters the entrances.

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, Contributing Building, Code C 211 Howard Street

Two-story brick commercial building executed in six-to-one common bond. A modern plate-glass double-leaf entrance has been installed at the building's southwest corner. Most of the second-story windows and the south elevation's east storefront have been boarded-up. The north elevation is blind.

A two-story building labeled "furniture warehouse" appears at this location on the 1923 Sanborn map. In 1949 and 1956 the building is labeled "general storage." The building has a 118 street address on Sanborn maps and stands on the west side of the alley (now Howard Street) between South Church and Southwest Main Street. This address does not appear in city directories.

This building and another no-longer-extant two-story commercial building to the north were attached to the rear of 123-127 Western Avenue. Access from Western Avenue has only been possible since the building at 123-127 has been demolished (post-1980).

NE. Main Street

Epstein's Store, 1912, Contributing Building, No Change 101 NE. Main Street

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Two-story commercial building with a stepped parapet and a deep metal modillion cornice. Constructed for notable Rocky Mount businessman Eli Epstein.

Epstein's Fashion Cove, ca. 1925, Contributing Building, No Change
109 NE. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a raked parapet.

Commercial Building, ca. 1965, Noncontributing Building, Code D
113 NE. Main Street

One-story stuccoed masonry commercial building that served as the City Human Relations Department in 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1900, Contributing Building, No Change
115-119 NE. Main Street

One-story brick commercial building with two storefronts, both of which retain original metal facades. The stepped parapets originally indicated the store name, "Taylor & Cuthrell." The south storefront (115) has been covered with particle board since 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1907, Contributing Building, No Change
125 NE. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with metal cornices above the first and second stories; an intact second-story features a corbelled cornice above the arched second-story window openings, which are flanked by pilasters with Corinthian capitals. The second-story window sills are granite; louvered wooden shutters cover the window sash. The two storefronts had already been altered by 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1900, 1960s, Noncontributing Building, Code D
129 NE. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a 1960s façade and a flat-roofed metal canopy over the storefront.

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Masonic Hall & Opera House, 1901-04, 1936, Demolished Building, Code E
131 NE. Main Street

Bank of Rocky Mount, 1889, 1904, Demolished Building, Code E
143 NE. Main Street

Bailey Building, ca. 1910, 1930s, Demolished Building, Code E
147 NE. Main Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1958, Contributing Building, Codes A and F
181-185 NE. Main Street

One-story triangular commercial building with buff-colored Roman brick veneer and four storefronts with large plate glass windows and plate-glass doors on the façade. This building does not appear on the 1956 updates to the 1923 Sanborn map and had a 181-183 NE. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Douglas Building, ca. 1915-1925, Contributing Building, Code F
201-215 NE. Main Street

This building had a 210-215 NE. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Two-story brick commercial building enlarged between 1917 and 1922 in the style of the original construction. A band of light-colored brick extends across the façade above the second-story windows. The building has been stuccoed and painted since 1980, obscuring this effect. All six storefronts have been enclosed with brick, and most of the second-story windows have been covered with plywood or particle board. The stepped parapet and "Douglas Building" sign are intact.

Cobb & Carlton Warehouse, ca. 1930, Demolished Building, Code E
221 NE. Main Street

City Ice Company, ca. 1928, Contributing Building, Code B
277 NE. Main Street

One-story brick commercial building with a loading dock at the façade's center. A shed-roofed hood shelters the loading dock; a double-leaf, diagonal-board door leads into the warehouse, which is illuminated by six-over-six double-hung sash and fixed six-light windows. A one-story office with a

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plate-glass door and windows projects from the warehouse's south elevation; high, two-light, horizontal windows extend across the office's south wall. A flat-roofed metal canopy extends across the office's façade.

The original nomination stated that this building was constructed circa 1955. Additional research supports a circa 1928 construction date. Sanborn maps show that a residence stood at this address in 1923. By 1930, city directories list City Ice Company at this location. The City Ice building appears on the 1949 and 1956 updates to the 1923 Sanborn map. The maps delineate the division of interior space into an office at the northwest corner, an ice machine in the center, and an ice house at the southwest corner. The rear half of the building was a freezing tank and the engine room projected from the northeast corner. A square frame cooling tower stood at the rear. The building operated night and day and had a thirty-ton capacity. City Ice remained at this location through the 1950s. The building served as Pemberton, Inc., an air-conditioning, heating, electrical contracting, and plumbing company, by 1980. Pemberton, Inc. vacated their office at 343 S. Washington Street by 1960, so it is possible that they moved to this location around that time.

Hick's Veterinary Hospital, ca. 1920, Demolished Building, Code E
283 NE. Main Street

Fenner's Warehouse # 2, ca. 1910, Demolished Building, Code E
287 NE. Main Street

NW. Main Street

Downtown Wig Market, ca. 1910, 1940, Contributing Building, No Change
100 NW. Main Street

Two-story, brick, early twentieth-century commercial building remodeled in the International style circa 1940. The building was stuccoed, the storefront altered, and a tall, curved, glass-block window added to the façade's south corner at that time. A flat-roofed canopy shelters the storefront.

Commercial Building, ca. 1901, 1950s, Noncontributing Building, Code D
106 NW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building that was heavily remodeled in the 1950s with the addition of a new brick veneer façade. The second-story window and transom above the storefront have been covered with

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vinyl siding since 1980. A metal roll-up door obscures the storefront.

Rose Drug Store, ca. 1917, Contributing Building, No Change
112 NW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building constructed for I. W. Rose. Rose Drug Store still occupied this building in 1980, making it one of the oldest continuously operated drugstores in Rocky Mount's Central Business District. The building has a shaped parapet and an altered storefront. The second-story windows have been boarded-up since 1980.

Rocky Mount Floral Company, ca. 1928, Contributing Building, No Change
114 NW. Main Street

This one-story brick commercial building with a shaped parapet and a stuccoed façade was deemed “the richest and best-preserved example of Rocky Mount’s remarkable group of small commercial buildings” in 1980. The building was constructed to house Rocky Mount’s first floral business and was recently renovated to serve as a hair studio. A stained-glass transom surmounts the arched entrance; black ornamental tiles are inset in the stucco.

Bailey’s Jewelry Company, ca. 1900, 1950s, Contributing Building, No Change
116 NW. Main Street

One-story brick commercial building with circa 1950s metal screening over the original façade. The storefront has been altered and part of the roof is missing.

Rocky Mount Central City Revitalization Corporation, ca. 1900, Contributing Building, No Change, 118 NW. Main Street

One-story brick commercial building. In 1980, the façade was sheathed with circa 1940s Carrera glass tiles, which have since been removed. The building was recently rehabilitated to serve as a coffee shop.

Commercial Building, ca. 1900, Contributing Building, No Change
120 NW. Main Street

One-story brick commercial building with a corbelled cornice and a stuccoed façade. The storefront had been altered by 1980.

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Commercial Building, ca. 1900, Contributing Building, No Change **122 NW. Main Street**

One-story brick commercial building with a corbelled cornice. The storefront had been altered by 1980.

Philips Building, 1907, Contributing Building, No Change **126 NW. Main Street**

Two-story brick office building designed by John C. Stout in the Beaux Arts style. Four pilasters with Corinthian capitals flank the façade's three window bays; keystone arches surmount the central entrance and second-story windows. The building has a denticulated, bracketed metal cornice as well as a corbelled cornice.

Commercial Building, ca. 1930, Contributing Building, No Change **132-134 NW. Main Street**

Two-story brick commercial building with two storefronts, both of which have Carrera glass surrounds. The second-story of 132 has been stuccoed around a large central plate-glass window and two six-over-six sash; 134 has paired six-over-six sash.

Montgomery Ward, ca. 1929, Contributing Building, No Change **140-142 NW. Main Street**

Three-story brick commercial building constructed to serve as a Montgomery Ward store. The façade has been covered with siding and the flat-roofed metal canopy that sheltered the storefront has been removed since 1980. The north and south elevations are blind; the rear (west) elevation retains two-over-two window sash.

Quinn Furniture Company, ca. 1925, Demolished Building, Code E **168-178 NW. Main Street**

Cameo Theater, ca. 1925, Demolished Building, Code E **180 NW. Main Street**

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Commercial Building, ca. 1925, Demolished Building, Code E
186 NW. Main Street

Advance Auto, ca. 1950, Demolished Building, Code E
188-190 NW. Main Street

SE. Main Street

Seaboard Coast Line Signal Tower, ca. 1950, Demolished Building, Code E
SE. Main Street

Rocky Mount National Bank, 1918, Contributing Building, No Change
107 SE. Main Street

This monumental five-story bank building was erected as a result of the Bank of Rocky Mount and First National Bank merger. The Washington, D. C. architecture firm of Milburn and Heister designed the building and D. J. Rose constructed it. Rocky Mount National Bank later became the National Bank of North Carolina, which closed in 1933 and reopened as People's Bank and Trust in 1934. The building also has a Tarboro Street entrance. Self-Help rehabilitated the building since 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1907, 1950s, Noncontributing Building, Codes D and F
109 SE. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a replacement scored concrete storefront which includes large aluminum-frame windows, a brick entrance surround, and partially bricked-up, arched, second-story window openings with metal casement windows. The façade, which retains little integrity, had already been altered by 1980. This building had a 109-115 SE. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Commercial Building, ca. 1907, Demolished Building, Codes E and F
119-121 SE. Main Street

This building had a 121 SE. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, 1990s, Demolished Building, Code E
123-125 SE. Main Street

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Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change 127-129 SE. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a metal modillion cornice and a scored stucco second story. The replacement storefront and pent-roofed hood had been added by 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, 1955, 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Code D 131 SE. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a stepped parapet. The façade was altered circa 1955 and was stuccoed by 1980. Alterations since that time include the application of brick veneer to the façade, which included infilling the recessed panel above the second-story windows, enclosing the windows, and modifying the storefront configuration.

Kyser's Drugstore, ca. 1912, Contributing Building, No Change 135 SE. Main Street

Two-story commercial building with a corbelled cornice, arched windows with granite keystones and continuous granite sills and lintels, and corner pilasters on the second story. The storefront has been altered since 1980; only the corner pilasters and denticulated cornice of the original metal storefront manufactured by George L. Mesker & Company Ironworks of Evansville, Indiana survive.

Commercial Building, ca. 1925, 1950s, Contributing Building, No Change 139 SE. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a shaped parapet, an altered storefront, and metal sheathing on the façade.

Commercial Building, ca. 1915, Contributing Building, No Change 143-147 SE. Main Street

Three-story brick commercial building with a deep, bracketed metal cornice and cast stone window sills, lintels, rectangular panels in the parapet, and coping. Both storefronts had been altered by 1980; 143 by the application of permastone and a flat-roofed metal hood, 147 by a Carrera glass surround and glass block transom. All of the double-hung second- and third-story windows have been covered with plywood since 1980, as has the storefront of 147.

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Commercial Building, 1896, Contributing Building, No Change 149-151 SE. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building constructed for J. D. Robbins in 1896, as indicated on central plaque that was in place in 1980 but has been removed since. Both storefronts had been altered by the application of Carrera glass surrounds by 1980. The double-hung second-story windows have been covered with plywood since 1980, as has part of the storefront of 149.

Commercial Building, ca. 1925, Contributing Building, No Change 155-157 SE. Main Street

One-story brick commercial building with two altered storefronts and later brick veneer.

Commercial Building, ca. 1925, Contributing Building, No Change 163-165 SE. Main Street

Three-story blonde brick commercial building with deep metal cornices above the first and third stories and brick pilasters flanking the window bays on the upper stories. Each group of three windows contains a central six-over-one sash window and two four-over-one sash windows, all of which were restored in 2007. The plate glass transoms above the west storefront windows have been covered with wood panels since 1980; the prism-glass transoms above the south storefront windows have been painted.

Commercial Building, ca. 1900, 1920, Contributing Building, Code F 203 SE. Main Street

This building had a 201-207 SE. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

This two-story brick commercial building with a stepped parapet was constructed circa 1900 as a general store for the firm of Joyner and Rowland and remodeled circa 1920. The second-story arched windows on the north (side) elevation have been enclosed and the first-story windows replaced. The second-story façade windows have also been replaced and both storefronts altered since 1980. A one-story concrete block garage extends from the east (rear) elevation.

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Cooper Building, ca. 1930, Contributing Building, Code F
213 SE. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with later brick veneer obscuring original second-story fenestration and an altered storefront. This building had a 209-211 SE. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change
221 SE. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a stepped parapet and a corbelled cornice. Second-story windows have been removed and storefronts altered since 1980. A pent-roofed hood extends across the façade above the storefront of 221 and the building next door, 223.

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change
223 SE. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with flat-arched lintels and quoins flanking the second-story window openings. Second-story window sash had been replaced and a false gable added above the altered storefront by 1980. The storefront has been altered again since 1980 and the metal cornice removed. A pent-roofed hood extends across the façade above the storefront of 223 and the building next door, 221. A front gable surmounts the double-leaf replacement entrance.

Commercial Building, ca. 1905, 1920s, Contributing Building, Code F
227-235 SE. Main Street

This building had a 227-231 SE. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Two-story brick commercial building constructed for Mathews, Weeks, and Company by D. J. Rose in 1905 and remodeled in the 1920s. All four storefronts had been altered, a wood-shingled, pent-roof hood constructed above the two northern storefronts, and the second-story windows on the two southern storefronts enclosed by 1980.

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SW. Main Street

Planter's Bank, 1906-07, Contributing Building, No Change 100 SW. Main Street

H. W. Simpson of New Bern designed this three-story brick commercial building for Planters Bank Corporation. The bank was still operating out of this building in 1980, making it Rocky Mount's oldest bank in continuous use by the same company. The building's Classical Revival elements include granite quoins, window sills, and flat-arched window lintels; fluted pilasters flanking the first-story entrances and some window bays; and a primary entrance surround with fluted pilasters surmounted by panels with an urn motif. The original metal cornice had been removed by 1980.

Standard Hardware Building, ca. 1901, Contributing Building, No Change 108 SW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with unusually complex and delicate corbelling constructed for Standard Hardware Company. The storefront was altered by 1980; the second-story windows have been replaced since that time.

Taylor's Department Store, ca. 1890, ca. 1900, Contributing Building, Code F 114-118 SW. Main Street

This building had a 114-122 SE. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Two-story brick commercial building probably constructed for T. J. Hackney and renovated ca. 1900. Mesker Brothers manufactured the pressed metal façade, which is the largest in the Central Business District.

Commercial Building, ca. 1900, Contributing Building, Code F 126-128 SW. Main Street

This building had a 128 SE. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Two-story brick commercial building with a denticulated metal cornice, raked parapet, and pyramidal finials. Brick corbelling and a central Palladian window further enliven the second story. Both storefronts were altered by 1980.

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Keel Dry Goods, ca. 1900, 1960s, Noncontributing Building, Code D **130 SW. Main Street**

Two-story brick commercial building constructed as a dry goods store for X. T. and J. W. Keel. The original façade is obscured by 1960s metal screening on the second story and blue tile on the first story. A flat-roofed metal canopy shelters the altered storefront.

Commercial Building, ca. 1945, Contributing Building, Code A **132 SW. Main Street**

Two-story brick commercial building with a recessed plate-glass entrance with sidelights and a transom and plate-glass display windows above a permastone kneewall. The transom above the storefront was covered by 1980; the flat-roofed metal canopy that sheltered the storefront has since been removed since then. Three six-over-six sash windows punctuate the façade's second story. A double-leaf entrance provides access from Howard Street.

This site originally had a 136 Southwest Main Street address. By 1923, it was renumbered 132-134, and a one-story bank facing Southwest Main Street and two one-story offices facing Howard Street occupied this location. City directories list the City Industrial Bank Building, which housed the Builders Federal Savings and Loan Association of Rocky Mount, City Industrial Bank, Twin County Rental Company, and the Life Insurance Company of Virginia at this address through 1940. Joyner's Sporting Goods occupied this location from circa 1945 until around 1952. Based on the building appearance and change in function, it appears that it was constructed circa 1945. Mebane Shoe Company occupied the building in 1980; it now serves as an Allstate Insurance office.

Rocky Mount Shoe & Clothing Company, ca. 1912, Contributing Building, No Change **138 SW. Main Street**

Two-story brick commercial building constructed to house the Rocky Mount Shoe and Clothing Company, which operated at this location through the 1980s. The building retains denticulated metal cornices above the second-story windows—which have two-over-two sash and flat-arched rusticated stone lintels and sills—and the altered storefront.

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Rocky Mount Savings & Trust Company, ca. 1925, Contributing Building, No Change 142 SW. Main Street

Two-story Beaux Arts-style masonry bank building designed by the Washington, D. C. architecture firm of Milburn and Heister and constructed by D. J. Rose.

Rosenbloom-Levy Store, ca. 1905, 1930s, Contributing Building, No Change 146 SW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building constructed for J. D. Blount, W. Gray Williams, and P. L. Thigpen as a dry goods store. Sold to clothing concern Rosenbloom-Levy in 1917 and operated as such until 1979. Harry Harles renovated the building in the Art Deco style in the 1930s, and the façade and storefront from that period are intact.

E. S. Levy Company, ca. 1905, Contributing Building, Code F 152-154 SW. Main Street

This building had a 152 SW. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Two-story brick commercial building constructed for J. D. Blount, W. Gray Williams, and P. L. Thigpen as a dry goods store. Sold to clothing concern Rosenbloom-Levy in 1917; remodeled in the 1950s. The storefronts are altered, but the 1950s façade has been removed from the second story since 1980, exposing a large central arched window opening flanked by two rectangular and two small rondel windows. All three larger windows have been infilled with concrete block, and all but the upper portion of the parapet has been painted red. The rear elevation retains a corbelled cornice and arched second-story windows.

Commercial Building, ca. 1915, 1950s, Contributing Building, Code F 158 SW. Main Street

This building had a 154-158 SW. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

D. J. Rose constructed this two-story brick commercial building for William D. Cochran and Charles C. Cochran, clothiers. The building was remodeled in the 1950s. The second-story windows are paired with nine-over-one sash; the storefront has been altered. The raised brick that originally outlined the windows and decorative panels on the façade's second-story has been removed, but is intact on the rear elevation.

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S. H. Kress and Company, ca. 1913, Contributing Building, No Change
162 SW. Main Street

Two-story blonde brick commercial building constructed for the Kress Department Store chain. Two cast stone "Kress" plaques are inset in the parapet. The first-story windows were infilled with brick by 1980; the second-story windows have been replaced and the storefront altered since then.

H. E. Brewer & Company General Store, ca. 1905, Noncontributing Building, Code D
202 SW. Main Street

D. J. Rose constructed this two-story brick commercial building for H. E. Brewer. The façade has been stuccoed and the storefront altered. The second-story window openings retain flat-arched stone lintels, but the sashes have been replaced. The original arched window and door openings on the side (north) elevation have been infilled with brick. The rear (west) elevation had two sliding doors at the second-story level at one time.

Glamour Shop, ca. 1908, 1970s, Noncontributing Building, Code D
206 SW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a stuccoed façade and an altered storefront. The original arched window and door openings on the rear elevation have been infilled with brick and concrete block.

Wise Fashions, ca. 1910, 1970s, Noncontributing Building, Code D
212 SW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with later brick veneer façade and altered storefront. The original arched window and door openings on the rear elevation have been infilled with brick and concrete block.

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change
218-224 SW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building constructed as the Gem Theater, one of Rocky Mount's earliest theaters. The building has three storefronts, all of which have been altered since 1980. Pilasters flank the second-story windows; the northern two facades retain a bracketed, denticulated metal second-story cornice and a denticulated cornice above the storefronts.

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Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change
232 SW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building erected to serve as a garage, but it has been utilized as a department store since ca. 1915. The building retains a bracketed, denticulated metal cornice. The second-story windows have been replaced and the storefront, which is sheltered by a flat-roofed metal canopy, has been altered.

Dawson Drug Company, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change
234 SW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building erected to serve as Dawson Drug Company. The building retains a bracketed, denticulated metal cornice and round-arched second-story windows; the storefront has been altered.

Grand Theater, ca. 1912, 1930s, Contributing Building, No Change
238 SW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building constructed as a vaudeville theater. The Art Deco façade was probably added in the 1930s. A flat-roofed metal canopy shelters the storefront. A five-bay concrete block garage addition extends from the rear elevation.

Commercial Building, ca. 1917, Contributing Building, Code A
244 SW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a metal modillion cornice and triglyph frieze. Six twelve-pane windows pierce the façade's second-story.

Belk-Tyler, ca. 1905, 1915, 1920, 1945, Contributing Building, Code A
250-260 SW. Main Street

Three-story commercial building sheathed in enameled metal panels. A flat-roofed canopy wraps around the building above the storefront, sheltering large plate-glass windows, double-leaf plate-glass entrances, and red-and-white-striped terrazzo sidewalks. Many of the storefronts have been enclosed, minimizing the display space. A two-story brick addition with glass-block second-story windows extends to the rear along Nash Street.

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Sanborn maps illustrate that a two-story Southern Express Company Building stood at the corner of Southwest Main and Nash Streets in 1907 and 1912. By 1917, a second two-story building had been constructed on the north elevation and a one-story garage on the west (rear) elevation. The 1923 Sanborn map illustrates three two-story commercial buildings facing Southwest Main Street with addresses of 248-252, 254-256, and 258-260 and the one-story garage fronting Nash Street. In 1930, city directories list Belk-Daughtridge Company department store at 248-252, the Palace of Sweets at 256, and the Newark Shoe Store at 260. By 1936, Belk-Tyler occupied 248-252, the Palace Restaurant 256, Bobbitts' Barber Shop 258 1/2, and the Cannon Shoe Store 260. The businesses remained the same in 1940 and 1945, with the exception of the barber shop, whose address was not listed. Sanborn maps indicate that the buildings were substantially remodeled or reconstructed by 1949. A third story was added to the buildings facing Southwest Main Street, and presumably the storefront was remodeled and metal panel sheathing added at the same time. The three-story section extended back to Howard Street, with a four-story tower at the southwest corner. A two-story addition replaced the one-story garage fronting Nash Street. Belk-Tyler opened a linens department at 225 South Church Street and a furniture store at 320-330 Southwest Main Street circa 1960. The company vacated their downtown Rocky Mount stores and moved to Golden East Mall in the 1980s.

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, Contributing Building, Code F
302-314 SW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a stepped parapet and six storefronts with a continuous metal modillion cornice and one-over-one second-story sash. The building has been rehabilitated since 1980. This building had a 300-314 SW. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Enterprise Furniture, ca. 1950, 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Codes D and F
320-330 SW. Main Street

Two-story, brick, Modernist commercial building with a flat-roofed canopy above multiple storefronts. This location served as Belk-Tyler's furniture store by the 1960s. The building has been substantially altered since 1980 as part of Station Square. The southern half of the 320 storefront has been enclosed with vinyl siding and large, multi-pane windows and a new deeply recessed entrance replaced part of the storefront at the northern end. A boxed cornice extends across the building's one-story southern section, which now has an address of 330 SW. Main Street. The clock that projected from the façade's center has been removed. This building had a 320 SW. Main Street address in the 1980 nomination.

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Main Street News Store, ca. 1948, 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Code D
334 SW. Main Street

Two-story brick commercial building that has been substantially altered since 1980 as part of Station Square. The original Carrera Glass façade and plate glass storefront have been replaced with brick veneer, a roll-up garage door, a central entrance, and a large, multi-pane window. A cornice has been added above the first story; three windows now pierce the façade's second story.

B. Klitzner & Son, Inc., ca. 1950, 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Code D
340 SW. Main Street

Two-story commercial building that has been substantially altered since 1980 as part of Station Square. The façade originally encompassed a large central recessed entrance bay flanked by plate glass windows, and was stone-veneered below a band of second-story windows. The storefront has been completely enclosed, the façade's lower two-thirds stuccoed, all of the second-story windows replaced, and small windows added to the first story.

Marigold Street, North Side

Commercial Building, ca. 1905, Contributing Building, No Change
110-118 Marigold Street

One-story brick commercial building originally constructed as the Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company. Storefronts have been altered and open corner bay enclosed with concrete block since 1980.

Marigold Street, South Side

Spur Distributing Company, ca. 1950, Contributing Building, Code A
101 Marigold Street

One-story, flat-roofed, concrete block service station with a projecting central bay. The eastern and central sections have large plate glass windows; the garage bay on the western end has been enclosed with wood siding. Deep eaves shelter the windows and entrances.

This building first appears on the 1956 updates to the 1923 Sanborn map. A small square filling station with the same name occupied this location in the 1940s.

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City Lunch, ca. 1938, Contributing Building, Code A 103 Marigold Street

B. D. Rabil constructed this one-story brick flatiron building to serve as a restaurant. A small, recessed, arched panel above the corner entrance is inscribed "Rabil's." The roof parapet has arched sections above the corner entrance and at the centers of the north and west elevations. Shallow projecting bays with plate glass windows extend from the façade and the west elevation's north end.

A loading dock for a no-longer-extant grocery warehouse stood at this location during the first decades of the twentieth century. City directories do not list this address in 1930 or 1936; in 1940 City Lunch occupied a new building at this location. The 1949 and 1956 Sanborn maps indicate that a restaurant operated at this address. City Lunch remained in the building through the 1980s.

Commercial Building, ca. 1938, Contributing Building, Code A 105 Marigold Street

One-story brick commercial building constructed by B. D. Rabil. Two single-leaf doors in the recessed central entrance provide access to either side of the storefront. The wood-shingled, pent-roofed hood above the storefront was in place by 1980; the storefront display windows have been replaced with smaller plate-glass windows since then.

A one-story grocery warehouse with a loading platform on its west elevation stood at this location during the first decades of the twentieth century. City directories do not list this address in 1930 or 1936; from 1940 until 1948 A & P Food Stores occupied a new building at this location. The 1949 and 1956 Sanborn maps indicate that wholesale electric parts business operated at this address.

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Code D 107 Marigold Street

This two-story brick commercial building is labeled "wholesale grocery" on the 1923 Sanborn map. City directories list no occupants at this address in 1930, the Watson Tobacco Company Inc. in 1936, Rocky Mount Textile Company (wholesale notions) in 1940, and Harry Payne Bowling in 1945. The 1949 and 1956 Sanborn maps show an auto parts business at this location. The storefront had been altered by 1980; the second-story has been sheathed with metal, obscuring windows, the corbelled cornice, and the stepped parapet since then. An arched door opening at east elevation's south corner, now covered with a metal

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security door, corroborates the building's circa 1910 construction date.

Nash Street, South Side

Commercial Building, ca. 1925, Demolished Building, Code E 113-117 Nash Street

This one-story brick commercial building had a stepped parapet and three storefronts. Only the upper portion of the façade remains as part of the entrance gate to Station Square.

Commercial Building, ca. 1925, Contributing Building, No Change 121-125 Nash Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a metal cornice and two storefronts, both of which have been altered since 1980. The building retains some original two-over-two sash on the second story and has been incorporated into Station Square, which has a 301 S. Church Street address. A one-story shed-roofed entrance vestibule has been constructed on the west elevation.

Rose Street, North Side

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, Code F 200-204 Rose Street

This building had a 200 Rose Street address in the 1980 nomination.

One-story brick commercial building with a corbelled cornice and a stepped parapet. All three storefronts had been altered by 1980; 202 has been enclosed with particle board since that time.

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, Contributing Building, Code F 206 Rose Street

This building had a 204 Rose Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Two-story brick commercial building with a stepped parapet. The second-story windows were covered in 1980; the storefront has been enclosed with plywood since that time.

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Commercial Building, ca. 1925, Contributing Building, Code F 208-216 Rose Street

This building had a 206-216 Rose Street address in the 1980 nomination.

One-story brick commercial block with five storefronts, all of which have been altered. A roll-up garage door on the east elevation provides access from Albemarle Avenue. A door and metal industrial sash pierce the building's stuccoed rear (north) elevation.

Sorsby's Alley, East Side

RBC Centura Drive-Thru, ca. 1990, Noncontributing Building, Code G 131 Sorsby's Alley

One-story brick RBC Centura bank drive-thru with a small teller office and five lanes sheltered by a zig-zag canopy.

Sunset Avenue, North Side

Cuthrell & Edwards Grocery, ca. 1901, 1970s, Noncontributing Building, Code D 114 Sunset Avenue

Two-story brick commercial building that originally housed the wholesale grocery firm of Cuthrell and Edwards. The façade was stuccoed and the storefront altered by 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1900, 1970s, Noncontributing Building, Code D 118 Sunset Avenue

Two-story brick commercial building that housed the offices of Rocky Mount's first Chamber of Commerce publication, the *Rocky Mount Record*, during the early twentieth century. The façade was stuccoed and the storefront altered by 1980.

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Sunset Avenue, South Side

J. C. Stout Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change 123 Sunset Avenue

Two-story brick commercial building with a denticulated metal cornice on the façade and east elevation and fluted pilasters flanking the storefront, which was altered by 1980. Brick pilasters and corbelled cornices demarcate the east elevation's five bays.

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Contributing Building, No Change 125 Sunset Avenue

Narrow, one-story, brick commercial building with round-arched window and door openings on the façade, a corbelled cornice, and a series of rear additions.

Commercial Building, ca. 1900, Contributing Building, No Change 141 Sunset Avenue

One-story brick commercial building with three storefronts and denticulated cornices. The eastern storefront has been enclosed since 1980 and the western elevation stuccoed in keeping with the large addition that extends from the building's southwest corner.

Tarboro Street, North Side

Commercial Building, ca. 1912, 1970s, Noncontributing Building, Code D 110 Tarboro Street

One-story brick commercial building with later brick veneer and a replacement storefront. This property had been altered by 1980, but as the changes were made outside of the period of significance it is noncontributing.

Commercial Building, ca. 1900, 1960s, Contributing Building, No Change 112 Tarboro Street

One-story brick commercial building unified with the neighboring building at 116 Tarboro Street by a 1960s façade.

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**Commercial Building, ca. 1900, 1960s, Contributing Building, No Change
116 Tarboro Street**

One-story brick commercial building unified with the neighboring building at 112 Tarboro Street by a 1960s façade.

**Commercial Building, ca. 1900, 1960s, Contributing Building, No Change
120 Tarboro Street**

One-story brick commercial building with a 1960s façade.

**Commercial Building, ca. 1905, 1930s, Contributing Building, No Change
124 Tarboro Street**

Two-story brick commercial building constructed as a dry goods store for Charles O. Calhoun and John H. Calhoun circa 1905. The building retains a corbelled cornice, window hoods, granite window sills, and a metal cornice above a circa 1930s storefront.

**Commercial Building, ca. 1905, 1930s, Contributing Building, No Change
128 Tarboro Street**

Two-story brick commercial building constructed for the Raleigh-based furniture store chain of G. S. Tucker & Company circa 1905. The commercial-style façade was probably added in the 1930s.

**May & Gorham Drug Store, 1904, 1906, Contributing Building, No Change
132 Tarboro Street**

D. J. Rose constructed this two-story brick commercial building for Reading D. Bullock and John D. Bullock in 1904 and enlarged it in 1906 in the same style. The building was originally known as “Five Points Drug Store” due to its location at the intersection of Tarboro, Washington, and Rose Streets. Architects, doctors, dentists, and other professionals rented second-floor office space in the Bullock Building.¹⁰ In 1980, this building retained an intact interior and was considered one of eastern North Carolina’s best examples of a turn-of-the-century drugstore.

¹⁰ *Central City Track Record*, December 1978.

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**(former) U. S. Post Office, 1914, Contributing Building, No Change
200 Tarboro Street**

Classical Revival-style United States Post Office Building designed by Treasury Department architect Oscar Wenderoth and built by D. J. Rose.

**Commercial Building, ca. 1930, Contributing Building, Code F
238 Tarboro Street**

This building had a 242 Tarboro Street address in the 1980 nomination.

One-story brick building with stepped parapet and stuccoed façade; originally constructed to serve as a bowling alley. The brick Art Deco filling station that was on the same lot (in front of the building) has been demolished since 1980.

Tarboro Street, South Side

**Commercial Building, ca. 1920, 1970s, Noncontributing Building, Code D
109 Tarboro Street**

Two-story brick commercial building with a bracketed metal cornice. The façade's second story is scored stucco with a large arched window opening, which has been enclosed and now contains a small rectangular metal casement window. The storefront was brick veneered and otherwise altered by 1980.

**Commercial Building, ca. 1900, 1920s, Contributing Building, No Change
111-119 Tarboro Street**

One-story brick commercial building with 1920s façade and three storefronts. In 1980, it was said to be the site of Rocky Mount's longest continually operating shoe repair business. The two eastern storefronts (115 and 119) had already been altered by 1980 and have not been changed; 111 has a replacement storefront sheltered by a bracketed, pent-roofed hood.

E. Thomas Street, North Side

**Commercial Building, ca. 1915, 1980s, Demolished Building, Codes E and F
108 E. Thomas Street**

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This building had a 106 E. Thomas Street address in the 1980 nomination.

**Commercial Building, ca. 1920, 1980s, Demolished Building, Code E
110-116 E. Thomas Street**

**Commercial Building, ca. 1920, 1980s, Demolished Building, Code E
120 E. Thomas Street**

This building had a 118 E. Thomas Street address in the 1980 nomination.

**Manhattan Theater, ca. 1935, Contributing Building, Code A
122 E. Thomas Street**

One-and-one-half-story brick building constructed as the Manhattan Theater to serve the African American community. This theater is first listed in the 1936 city directory. Since 1980, the Art Deco marquee has been removed, the ticket windows and one entrance enclosed, and the façade's central fluted section, which extends into a stepped parapet, infilled with stucco. Two small octagonal windows pierce the parapet.

**Commercial Building, ca. 1930, Demolished Building, Codes C and E
124 E. Thomas Street**

**Armstrong's Medical Clinic, ca. 1955, Demolished Building, Code E
128 E. Thomas Street**

**Booker-T Theater, ca. 1925, Contributing Building, Code D
130 E. Thomas Street**

Two-story brick building constructed as the Savoy Theater. Classical façade with round-arched windows flanked by pilasters, a shaped parapet, and a central panel with a classical figure in relief. The marquee had been replaced by 1980; the ticket booth has been removed and the entrance altered since then. The interior was gutted in September 2008 due to extreme deterioration.

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Burnett Building, ca. 1925, Contributing Building, No Change
132-134 E. Thomas Street

Two-story brick commercial building constructed of Hy-Tex brick for J. B. Burnett. The building retains a shaped parapet and metal cornices above the first and second stories on the E. Thomas and Albemarle Avenue façades. All three storefronts (132-134 E. Thomas Street and 204 Albemarle Avenue) have been altered since 1980, and the second-story windows have been covered with plywood.

Commercial Building, ca. 1925, Contributing Building, No Change
200-210 E. Thomas Street

One-story brick commercial building sheathed in stucco with inset tile decoration and a shaped parapet. All six storefronts have been altered and boarded up since 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1925, Contributing Building, No Change
201 E. Thomas Street

One-story brick commercial building with a stepped parapet.

Commercial Building, ca. 1940, Contributing Building, Code A
203-205 E. Thomas Street

One-story brick commercial building with two altered storefronts. The façade is executed in running bond; the east and south elevation in five-to-one common bond.

Sanborn maps illustrate that a dwelling stood at this location through 1923. The first city directory listing for this address was in 1940, when B. R. Hunt Transfer occupied the building. The building was vacant in 1945, served as a furniture warehouse in 1949, was vacant in 1952, and housed the Browning Auto Parts store in 1955, a use that has continued until the present time.

N. Washington Street, East Side

Commercial Building, ca. 1905, Contributing Building, No Change
119 N. Washington Street

Two-story brick commercial building with corbelled cornices above the first and second stories and buff-

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colored brick quoins, pilasters, and a band of six lozenges across the parapet.

Commercial Building, ca. 1900, Contributing Building, No Change 123 N. Washington Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a corbelled cornice, three brick pilasters separating the second story into two bays, and flat-roofed metal canopy over the storefront. The second-story windows have flat-arched granite lintels and remain boarded-up, as they were in 1980. The building extends east through the block, where a large three-story section fronts Albemarle Avenue.

Carolina Telephone & Telegraph Building, 1948, 1970, Noncontributing Building, Code D 143 N. Washington Street

This building had a 131-143 and 151-159 N. Washington Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Three-story brick office building constructed for Carolina Telephone and Telegraph in 1948. A metal cornice with a geometric Art Deco motif surmounts the central two-story row of windows. Metal geometric screens are inset in the entrance's sidelights and transom. A pink marble entrance surround enlivens the buff-colored brick façade; the rest of the building is red brick. The four-story ca. 1970 Modernist addition on the south side has square buff-colored brick panels outlined in white concrete and has the appearance of a separate building.

N. Washington Street, West Side

Commercial Building, ca. 1895, Demolished Building, Code E 114 N. Washington Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1895, Contributing Building, Code F 118 N. Washington Street

This building had a 116-118 N. Washington Street address in the 1980 nomination.

One-story brick commercial building originally constructed as a market. The storefront has been boarded-up since 1980.

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Commercial Building, ca. 1920, Noncontributing Building, Codes D and F 120 N. Washington Street

This building had a 120-122 N. Washington Street address in the 1980 nomination.

One-story brick commercial building with a corbelled cornice and two storefronts. The south (122) storefront has been replaced with a roll-up garage door since 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1895, Contributing Building, No Change 126 N. Washington Street

Two-story brick commercial building with arched second-story windows and an elaborate corbelled cornice above an altered storefront.

S. Washington Street, East Side

Commercial Building, ca. 1922, 1950, Contributing Building, Code C 201 S. Washington Street

Three-story brick commercial building with bracketed metal cornices that extend across the façade above the first and third stories; brick pilasters flanking the window bays on the upper stories; and cast stone coping, window sills and lintels. The façade is executed in Flemish bond with glazed headers; the side and rear elevation in five-to-one common bond with glazed headers. The northern façade bay retains its original configuration (a garage door and a single-leaf entrance); the four additional storefronts have been enclosed since 1980. The second-story windows on the façade and north elevation and the garage bay and first-story storefronts on the north elevation have been infilled with glass block. The rear (east) elevation has metal casement windows and a corrugated metal garage door. A one-story ca. 1950 addition extends from the rear elevation.

Sanborn maps illustrate that a dwelling stood at this location, 217 Hill Street, until 1949. The addition, which has metal casement windows and a large roll-up garage door, appears on the 1956 Sanborn map and is labeled “garage.” It currently functions as Sta-Kool Laundries.

According to the original survey file entry, this building was constructed as the Electric Shop for M. P. J. Williams, W. H. Horne, W. D. Rives, and W. A. Glasgow. The 1923 Sanborn map indicates that it functioned as an auto repair shop, selling batteries and tires. The 1930 city directory lists Davenport

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Motor Company at this address. By 1940 the building served as an Orange Crush and Pepsi-Cola Bottling Plant and the 1949 and 1956 Sanborn maps label the building as such. Carolina Machinery and Supply Company occupied the building by 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1940, Contributing Building, No Change
219 S. Washington Street

Two-story brick commercial building. Altered storefront; second story retains metal casement windows.

Commercial Building, ca. 1915, Contributing Building, No Change
223 S. Washington Street

Two-story brick commercial building. Storefront was already altered and second-story windows replaced in 1980.

W. L. Cockrell's Garage, ca. 1915, 1980s, Noncontributing Building, Code C
227-231 S. Washington Street

One-story brick commercial building with two storefronts, each of which has been infilled with wood siding, a roll-up garage door, and a single-leaf entrance. "Vulcanizing" is painted in the brick panel above the 227 storefront. A corbelled cornice extends across the façade. The round-arched window and door openings on the rear elevations have been infilled with brick.

The 1923, 1949, and 1956 Sanborn maps indicate that 227 South Washington Street served as an auto painting facility and 231 an auto repair shop. City directories list Reliable Radiator Works at 231 in 1930 and W. L. Cockrell's Garage with a 225-231 address in 1936. Cockrell's Garage is listed at this location through the 1960s, sometimes with just a 231 address. The 227 South Washington Street address was not used until recently, although it appears on the Sanborn maps.

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Noncontributing Building, Codes D and F
247 S. Washington Street

This one-story brick commercial building was constructed ca. 1910 for K. K. Bell and F. P. Dunn as the Rocky Mount Motor Car Company and received an addition in 1912 of the storefront at 251 S. Washington Street. This building had two storefronts and a garage bay at the south end in 1980. All three sections' facades have been recently sheathed in vinyl siding. The plate glass windows and entrance

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in the northern section have been replaced with one small central window. The central section's storefront has also been altered, and now consisted of a central door flanked by two windows. The southern section retains the original garage door.

This building had a 243-251 S. Washington Street address in the 1980 nomination. Extensive alterations to the storefronts since 1980 resulted in a status change for this property, but since it lies within a substantially intact block of the original district, the building cannot be removed from the district boundaries.

S. Washington Street, East Side

First National Bank, ca. 1912, Contributing Building, No Change 106 S. Washington Street

Two-story brick bank building with metal cornices above the first and third stories; brick pilasters with Corinthian capitals flanking the window bays on the upper stories; and a recessed corner entrance with a double-leaf door, a Classical surround, prism-glass transoms, and a hexagonal white tile floor with "First Nat'l Bank" spelled out in green tile. A robust marble Tuscan column anchors the building's northeast corner. The red-brick building has been painted off-white since 1980 and the windows have been replaced with tinted glass sash.

Parking Lot

Commercial Building, ca. 1912, Demolished Building, Code E 108 S. Washington Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1905, Demolished Building, Code E 112-118 S. Washington Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1905, Demolished Building, Code E 122 S. Washington Street

Façade, ca. 1990, Noncontributing Building, Codes E and G 126 S. Washington Street

A two-story brick commercial building with a pointed central parapet constructed for T. A. Davenport's

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feed and seed business stood at this location. The building has been demolished since 1980 and a simplified façade reconstructed in what is now Harambee Square.

Façade, ca. 1990, Noncontributing Building, Codes E and G 130 S. Washington Street

A two-story brick commercial building constructed to serve as Gorham and Matthews Hardware Company for J. S. Gorham and J. L. Matthews stood at this location. The building has been demolished since 1980 and a simplified façade reconstructed in what is now Harambee Square.

Parking Lot

Commercial Building, ca. 1900, Demolished Building, Codes E and G 134-144 S. Washington Street

A one-story brick commercial building with three storefronts and a corbelled cornice stood at this location. The building has been demolished since 1980 and a brick façade emulating the three storefronts was constructed as part of the sites' new use as Harambee Square and a parking lot.

Commercial Building, ca. 1906, Contributing Building, No Change 148-152 S. Washington Street

Two-story brick commercial building constructed for T. P. Braswell and occupied by the firm of Bulluck, Byrd, and Company in the early twentieth century. A corbelled cornice and round-arched windows enliven the façade. The second-story windows on the façade and the two storefronts have been replaced since 1980; double-hung sash and a side entrance were added to the north elevation after the neighboring one-story commercial building was demolished.

Commercial Building, ca. 1915, Contributing Building, No Change 154 S. Washington Street

Two-story brick commercial building constructed for the general merchandise firm of G. Crat Robbins. The building retains bracketed metal cornices that extend across the façade above the first and second stories, corbelling, and a stepped parapet. The second-story windows had already been replaced in 1980; the original storefront and prism glass transoms have been removed since that time.

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Pitt-Harris Furniture Company, ca. 1920, Contributing Building, No Change
158-162 S. Washington Street

Three-story brick commercial building constructed to serve as the Pitt-Harris Furniture Company; later Enterprise Furniture. The building retains bracketed metal cornices that extend across the façade above the first and third stories; brick pilasters flanking the window bays on the upper stories; and cast stone coping, window sills and lintels. The second- and third-story windows were boarded up in 1980; new double-hung sash have been installed since that time.

Commercial Building, ca. 1915, Contributing Building, No Change
164-168 S. Washington Street

Two-story brick commercial building with a stepped parapet and blonde brick accents including the coping, rectangular panel below the parapet's pointed central sections, the corbelled cornice, and the soldiers courses above the first- and second-story windows. The storefronts retain prism-glass transoms; all of the building's double-hung sash have been replaced and two new window openings added on the east end of the south elevation's first story since 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1950, Demolished Building, Code E
200 S. Washington Street

Whaley's Warehouse, ca. 1920, Contributing Building, Code F
216 S. Washington Street

This building had a 218 S. Washington Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Three-story brick warehouse building. Corbelled cornice and prism glass transoms above three are intact; storefronts had been modified and windows boarded up in 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1915, Contributing Building, No Change
232-234 S. Washington Street

One-story brick commercial building. The plate glass windows on the south storefront (234) have been enclosed, the double-leaf front door replaced, the black and white tile kneewall painted bright blue, and the front and side entrances on the north storefront (232) have been covered with particle board since 1980.

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Commercial Building, ca. 1915, Demolished Building, Code E
238 S. Washington Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Noncontributing Building, Code D
244 S. Washington Street

One-story brick commercial building originally used as office space. The corbelled cornice is intact, but the storefront has been enclosed with brick, four small square windows have been installed in place of the original large plate glass windows, and the entrance has been replaced since 1980.

Commercial Building, ca. 1940, Noncontributing Building, Code C
316 S. Washington Street

One-story brick commercial building with a heavily altered storefront. This building is attached to the rear of 107 Marigold Street and was not listed individually in the original district inventory list.

Commercial Building, ca. 1924, Demolished Building, Code E
320 S. Washington Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1950, Demolished Building, Code E
322 S. Washington Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1922, Contributing Building, Code F
348 S. Washington Street

Three-story brick commercial building originally constructed for Henry W. Cutchin, P. C. Shore, and R. L. Wooten. Housed Edwards-Cutchin Motor Company, the Hudson and Essex dealership, in the 1920s. This building had a 334-338 S. Washington Street address in the 1980 nomination.

Western Avenue, South Side

H. E. Brewer & Company, ca. 1915, 1920, Demolished Building, Code E
123 Western Avenue

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Commercial Building, ca. 1915, Contributing Building, No Change 129-137 Western Avenue

One-story brick commercial block that housed the Coca-Cola Bottling Company in the 1920s. All three storefronts were altered by 1980.

Western Avenue, North Side

Rose Building, 1960, Contributing Building, Code C 132-136 Western Avenue

Two-story, flat-roofed, brick office building with aqua panels at the cornice and beneath the large plate-glass windows on the south and east elevations. Two recessed entrances and three additional single-leaf doors provide access from the Western Avenue façade. The Howard Street entrance is at the building's northeast corner. Five long horizontal sliding-sash windows and one double-hung window pierce the west elevation. A steel balcony and ladder under the double-hung sash serve as the emergency exit.

Arthur G. Cockrell's one-story garage and filling station stood at this location through 1956.

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Boundary Increase

The following properties have been added to the Rocky Mount Central City Historic District.

Albemarle Avenue, East Side

Stokes Mortuary, 1941, 1953, Contributing Building 207 Albemarle Avenue

C. C. Stokes Sr. and Frank Daniels partnered in 1923 to open Stokes Mortuary, which was originally located at 116 East Thomas Street. They dissolved their partnership in 1933 and C. C. Stokes continued to operate the funeral home. Sanborn maps show that a one-story dwelling stood at the Albemarle Avenue location from 1901 until 1923, and city directories list residents through 1940, so it appears that the dwelling was demolished at the time the mortuary was constructed. Architect Gordam Albott designed the building at 207 Albemarle Avenue, which was completed in June 1941. Stokes Funeral Parlor is listed in the 1945 city directory and appears on the 1949 Sanborn map. In the 1950s, the mortuary also served as a meeting place for an economic development corporation, which focused on creating industrial jobs for Rocky Mount's African American community. The local NAACP chapter also occasionally met at the building in the 1960s. C. C. Stokes Sr. passed away in 1969, and his son, C. C. Stokes Jr., daughter Norma Stokes Warner, and her husband, attorney W. O. Warner, took over the family business. C. C. Stokes Jr. ran the business until his health declined in 2007, at which time he turned the funeral home over to his son, C. C. Stokes III, and nephew, Aaron Warner. Marion Lewis is currently the funeral director. According to Mr. Warner, Stokes Mortuary is the oldest African American business in the area still in operation, and one of Rocky Mount's oldest funeral homes. The Stokes and Warner families owned two houses north of the mortuary on Albemarle Avenue. Company employees resided in the homes until they burned in the 1980s and 1990s. They still own the vacant lots, the metal-sided warehouse across the street at 410 Albemarle Avenue, and the vacant lot north of the warehouse.¹¹

The one-story brick building has a low front-gable roof behind a stepped parapet. The front porch was enclosed and a flat-roofed carport, a small addition on the north elevation, and stone planters were constructed in 1953.¹²

¹¹ C. C. Stokes, Stokes Mortuary Study List application, 1991. On file at the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh; Aaron Warner, telephone conversation with the Heather Fearnbach, December 10, 2008.

¹² C. C. Stokes, Stokes Mortuary Study List application, 1991.

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Garage, 1941, Contributing Building

One-story, front-gable roofed garage with three bays and wood-sided gables.

Vacant Lot, 211 Albemarle Avenue

Vacant Lot, 215 Albemarle Avenue

Vacant Lot, 239 Albemarle Avenue

Atlantic Avenue, West Side

Vacant Lot, 112 Atlantic Avenue

Vacant Lot, 116 Atlantic Avenue

Commercial Building, ca. 1970, Noncontributing Building 120 Atlantic Avenue

One-story brick commercial building with a flat-roofed entrance porch supported by round metal posts on the east elevation's south end. The building's side elevations are blind; a square window on the south side of the entrance illuminates the building's east end.

Sanborn maps illustrated that this lot was vacant in 1901; by 1907 a large two-story dwelling occupied the site. The house was divided into apartments by 1949 and was vacant in 1965.

Vacant Lot, 208 Atlantic Avenue

Vacant Lot, 210 Atlantic Avenue

Vacant Lot, 214 Atlantic Avenue

House, ca. 1910, Contributing Building 216 Atlantic Avenue

Two-story, hip-roofed, weatherboarded dwelling with a projecting two-story pedimented bay on the façade's south end. Replacement square posts support the hip-roofed front porch. (The 1979 survey

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photographs show the original tapered porch posts.) The house retains original two-over-two sash and a standing-seam metal roof pierced by a brick interior chimney. A small shed-roofed porch supported by square posts shelters an auxiliary entrance on the main block's north elevation. A one-story gabled wing extends from the rear; the shed-roofed porch on the wing's north elevation has been enclosed.

Sanborn maps indicate that this lot was vacant until 1907. In 1912, a two-story dwelling with a one-story ell appears at this location along with two almost identical dwellings to the south. The address was originally 214 Atlantic Avenue; it changed to 216 by 1923. City directories list Hezekiah Wilbur Townsend, his wife Nettie Lucille, their son H. Wilbur Jr., who worked as a porter, and their daughter Helen, a student, as the occupants in 1930 and the owner/occupants through 1945. Mrs. Townsend owned and resided in the property through 1955. It appears that the house then became a rental; Sidney M. Harris is listed as the occupant in 1960 and Leah C. Williams in 1965.

Vacant Lot 224 Atlantic Avenue

The one-story brick doctor's office that stood on this lot was demolished in May 2009. A flat-roofed canopy wrapped around the south, east, and west elevations and sheltered a carport on the north elevation. Projecting brick pilasters flanked the primary entrance on the east elevation and an auxiliary entrance on the south elevation. The three large plate-glass windows on the façade were covered with particle board. High rectangular windows pierced the side elevations. Low brick planters extended around the south and east elevations.

This lot on the northwest corner of Ivy Street and Atlantic Avenue originally had a 220 Ivy Street address. The lot was vacant through April 1912; a two-story dwelling is shown on Sanborn maps from 1917 through 1956. City directories list Dr. Joseph W. Parker's office at 224 Atlantic Avenue in 1960 and the Bryant Medical Clinic, owned by Dr. James E. Bryant, in 1965.

Dr. Parker attended Howard University and graduated around 1948. He was the first African American to serve on the Rocky Mount School Board, and after his death in a car accident in 1960 J. W. Parker Junior High School was named in his honor. His father, Joseph Parker Sr., sold real estate and insurance from an office in the Douglas Building for many years. Dr. Bryant graduated from medical school in 1960 and opened his Rocky Mount clinic shortly thereafter.¹³

¹³ R. D. Armstrong, "A Bicentennial Report on Negroes in Nash County and Their Contributions," 195, 197, in T. E. Ricks, ed., *Nash County Historical Notes: A Bicentennial Tribute* (Rocky Mount: Nash County Bicentennial Commission,

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House, ca. 1905, Contributing Building
226 Atlantic Avenue

One-story, aluminum-sided, hip-roofed Queen Anne cottage with a wood-shingled front gable and a small central gable on the north elevation. The hip-roofed front porch is supported by turned, bracketed posts spanned by a wooden balustrade. Two-over-two sash illuminate the dwelling, which is protected by a standing seam metal roof pierced by tall, corbelled chimney stacks. A one-story, hip-roofed wing extends from the west elevation. A low concrete-block wall surrounds the front yard.

This house first appears on the April 1907 Sanborn map. The address was originally 224 Atlantic Avenue; it changed to 226 by 1923. The first occupant listed in city directories is Ella Whitehead, who rented the house in 1930. She remained in residence through 1936. Joseph Barrett and his wife Adelaide resided in the house in 1940; by 1950 he owned the property. In 1955 Joseph worked as an Atlantic Coastline Railroad painter; in 1958 the couple operated Barrett's Beauty Shop out of their home.

Hood House, ca. 1905, Contributing Building
232 Atlantic Avenue

One-story, L-plan, weatherboarded Queen Anne cottage with decorative wood shingles in the projecting front gable. Turned posts support the hip-roofed front porch. A modern wooden railing has replaced the original turned balustrade since 1979. The house retains original two-over-two-sash, rests on a concrete block foundation, and is sheltered by a standing-seam metal roof pierced by a brick interior chimney. The one-story wing that extends from the rear elevation has six-over-six sash, a central stovepipe chimney, and an enclosed rear shed porch.

This dwelling first appears on the 1907 Sanborn map with a 228 Atlantic Avenue address. The 1923 Sanborn map shows the address change to 232. City directories indicate that African American physician Joseph A. Hood and his wife Marian occupied the house in 1930; and list Marion M. Hood as the resident and owner from 1936 until 1952. It appears that the house then became a rental; Mrs. Addie B. Dunston, who worked as a hanger at Export Leaf Tobacco, occupied the dwelling in 1955 and Josh and Mary G. Pettaway in 1958 and 1960. Josh was a checker at the Cobb and Foxhall tobacco warehouse. There is no city directory listing for this address in 1965.

1976). J. W. Parker Junior High was constructed in 1962. North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, *Rocky Mount Schools Special Report, 1989-90* (Raleigh: School Planning, 1990), 82.

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House, ca. 1920, Contributing Building 236 Atlantic Avenue

One-and-one-half story frame bungalow with a clipped-side-gable roof, an inset front porch supported by tapered posts on brick piers, shed-roofed dormers on the front and rear roof slopes, exposed rafter ends, triangular eave brackets, a brick interior chimney, and a concrete block foundation. Four-over-four and eight-over-eight sash illuminate the dwelling. A shed-roofed bay projects from the south elevation. The rear shed porch has been enclosed and the main block sheathed with rolled-asphalt siding.

Sanborn maps illustrate that this lot was vacant in 1901. By 1907, a row of three small duplexes with porches on their south elevations extended west from Atlantic Avenue at this location. They remained in place until at least 1917, and were replaced by a bungalow with a 236 Atlantic Avenue address by 1923. City directories list Lincoln School principal Susie C. Baskerville as the occupant from 1930 through 1940; by 1950 Mrs. Nora E. Bailey, a public stenographer and notary public, owned and occupied the house and Reverend William D. Burgess, the pastor at Faith Presbyterian Church, was also in residence. In 1955 Anna E. Brown, a teacher at Booker T. Washington High School, rented a room in Mrs. Bailey's house. Mrs. Bailey remained in residence through the 1960s.

Shed, ca. 1990, Noncontributing Building

One-story, prefabricated shed resting on a concrete pad.

Hunter-Odom Funeral Home, 1960s, 1978, Noncontributing Building 240 Atlantic Avenue

One-story flat-roofed funeral home with a brick southern section and a metal-sided northern section. A projecting metal boxed cornice extends across the façade and north elevation, sheltering the entrances. Rectangular metal windows illuminate the brick section; tall, narrow plate glass windows illuminate the metal-sided section. Round metal posts support the flat-roofed carport on the south elevation.

Sanborn maps show that a one-story dwelling occupied this location from circa 1923 through circa 1956. City directories list the residence of Mrs. Maggie W. Wiggins at this address in 1960 and Hunter's Funeral Home in 1965. It appears that the brick section of Hunter-Odom Funeral Home was constructed in the early 1960s and the metal-sheathed addition in the 1980s.

Garage, 1960s, Noncontributing Building

One-story, flat-roofed, concrete block garage with two roll-up doors and a single-leaf entrance.

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A flat-roofed, two-bay, wooden carport with a poured-concrete floor extends from the north elevation.

St. John A. M. E. Zion Church, late 1950s, interior completed in early 1960s, Contributing Building 250 Atlantic Avenue

According to the church cornerstone, the St. John A.M.E. Zion congregation was established in 1886 and the sanctuary dedicated in 1963 under the direction of Pastor D. L. Blakey and Bishop William A. Stewart. Sanborn maps indicate that the lot at the southwest corner of East Goldleaf Street and Atlantic Avenue was vacant until April 1907. The next Sanborn map, dated July 1912, depicts the "A.M.E. Zion Church of Rocky Mount," a one-story building with a two-story belltower in the southeast corner, at that location. The church, which had electric lights and heating stoves, faced Atlantic Avenue, and was labeled "St. John's A. M. E. Church" in 1917 and 1923. Between 1923 and 1949 the church was moved west on the lot and rotated north to face East Goldleaf Street. By 1956 a new sanctuary with the current footprint and two corner towers had been constructed at the original location on the corner. The 1958 city directory lists this address as "under construction." According to the pastor, Reverend Florence Pender, the church took many years to complete, during which time the congregation met in the basement.¹⁴ Photographs of Booker T. Washington High School classes in front of St. John A.M.E. Zion Church in the late 1950s indicate that the exterior was finished by that time.¹⁵

The one-story, brick, Gothic Revival-style church occupies a prominent corner lot. Two stair towers flank a central recessed entrance porch. Three round arches surmount brick posts, framing the double-leaf entrance and two pointed-arch stained-glass windows. A large pointed-arch stained-glass window is centered in the façade gable; smaller pointed-arch windows illuminate the stair tower. Five brick buttresses with concrete caps delineate the six window bays on each of the side (north and south) elevations. A large pointed-arch stained-glass window occupies the third bay; pairs of pointed-arch and rectangular stained-glass windows fill the other bays. A large round stained-glass window and two small rectangular ones pierce the rear (west) elevation. Brick and concrete steps with a metal railing lead to the auxiliary entrance on the west elevation. A double-leaf metal door provides access to the basement. A concrete handicapped ramp slopes to the west from an entrance on the south elevation. Metal awnings shelter all of the auxiliary entrances. A tall brick chimney with a corbelled stack extends from the north roof slope. The church interior was completed in 1963 and remodeled after Hurricane Floyd caused

¹⁴ Florence Pender, interview with the author, 12/4/08.

¹⁵ Photographs in the collection of the Booker T. Washington Alumni Museum, Rocky Mount.

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extensive damage in 1999. The roof was replaced at that time, the 1960s pews were reupholstered, the round stained-glass window repaired, and the balcony ends enclosed to allow for the placement of HVAC units in an elevated location. The dropped ceiling was removed to expose large trusses, from which Gothic Revival-style pendant light fixtures are suspended. A low paneled screen separates the altar from the sanctuary. The choir loft occupies a recessed area beneath a pointed arch. The church office and the Deaconess room flank the choir loft and altar.

A handicapped restroom is located on the north side of the small entrance foyer. Steel stairs in each corner tower lead to the balcony and the basement, which has a concrete floor. The basement encompasses a large central fellowship hall, classrooms, restrooms, a kitchen, and storage areas. Some of the original Eastlake and Craftsman-style altar furniture and carved church pews are utilized throughout the basement.

Commercial Building, ca. 1915, 1940, Contributing Building 301-305 Atlantic Avenue

One-story, brick corner commercial building executed in five-to-one common bond with a decorative band of headers that wraps around the building above the window lintels. The recessed panels above each of the three Atlantic Avenue storefronts have been infilled with stucco. Each storefront consists of a central door surmounted by a transom and flanked by windows. Most of the door, transom, and window openings have been covered with T-111 siding or particle board. The 301 storefront entrance is at the building's southwest corner.

Sanborn maps indicate that a duplex stood at this location through circa 1912 and that a rectangular grocery store replaced the duplex by 1917. The building had a small front porch by 1923. The 1930 city directory lists John H. Sessoms as the grocery owner at 301 Atlantic Avenue; the building was vacant in 1936. In 1940, Goldleaf Cash Grocery occupied 301; Curtis Dew, confectioner, was located at 303; and 305 was vacant. The 1949 Sanborn maps illustrate the current footprint, with two additional Atlantic Avenue storefronts added on the north side of the original building and one Goldleaf Street storefront on the east side. In 1950, David Lane and Sigmund N. Sultan operated a grocery at 301, Roy Green a barbershop at 303, and the Two Spot Café occupied 305. The building's function remained the same in 1955, with Goldleaf Grocery at 301, the Atlantic Avenue Barber Shop at 303, and Thomas Café at 305. Purvis Smoke Shop occupied 305 in 1960; the other two businesses remained the same. In 1965, Pretlow Superette was at 301; the other businesses were still in operation.

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S. Church Street, East Side

Commercial Building, 1924, 1960s, Noncontributing Building 115-123 S. Church Street

This two-story brick commercial building retains original second-story windows behind a circa 1960s metal screen. The storefronts and the showroom at the northwest corner have been altered, but the interior is otherwise largely intact. The rear auto service space retains pressed metal ceilings, an elaborate metal cornice, metal casement windows, and a concrete floor. The west wall, which separated the service area from the auto showroom, is sheathed in beadboard. A large metal double-leaf door provided vehicle access to the showroom. A beadboard-sheathed stair on the north elevation leads to the second floor. A large wood sliding garage door still hangs on its sliding track west of the stair, although a modern roll-up door now occupies the garage bay. Steel beams and posts provide additional support for the second story garage service area. A hydraulic lift moved vehicles from the first floor to the second for service. The second floor is a large open space with wood floors and a wood roof framing system.

Sanborn maps indicate that this location was vacant in 1923; the current owners state that this commercial building was constructed in 1924. City directories list Pleasants Funeral Home at 115 South Church Street and the Bullock Auto Sales storeroom at 117-119 in 1930. It appears that the upper floor of 123 may have served as an apartment at that time, as residents are listing at that address beginning in 1930. By 1936, Bullock Auto Sales expanded into 115 and Charles L. Sanders Jr. lived in the apartment at 123. Bullock Auto Sales occupied the building through 1960. No apartment residents are listed in 1945, but by 1950 the space served as offices for the State Capital Life Insurance Company, Home Security Life Insurance Company, and the Massachusetts Protective Association. Sanborn maps show a two-story brick auto sales and service building at this location in 1949. The one-story brick wing extending from the northeast corner is labeled "auto laundry." Virginia's Dress Shop and civil engineer Fred R. Dasher occupied the second floor of 123 in 1955. The space was vacant in 1960. In 1965, Bel-Air Chevrolet, owned by the Bullock family, is listed at 115 South Church Street.

Parking Lot

Commercial Building, 1953, Contributing Building 225 S. Church Street

This one-story brick commercial building has a Modernist façade with permastone framing the plate-glass curtain wall. The windows on the façade's south end have been covered with plywood and the boxed

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cornice sheathed with vinyl. The building's north elevation is blind with the exception of a central replacement double-leaf plate glass door with sidelights and a transom. The windows of the rear one-story brick building have been covered with plywood.

Sanborn maps show a two-story dwelling at this location in 1923 and 1949 and a commercial building with the current footprint in 1956. A small attached building at the rear served as a tire repair shop at that time. There is no city directory listing for this address in 1950, but Sears, Roebuck, and Company is listed at 221-225 in 1955 and Belk-Tyler's South Church Street store in 1960 and 1965. The property tax card date is 1953. The Booker T. Washington High School Alumni Association Resource Center purchased the Belk-Tyler Building in 1997 and created a museum commemorating alumni achievements.

Firestone Stores, ca. 1930, 1960s, Contributing Building 231 S. Church Street

One-story variegated-brick commercial building with two garage bays at the façade's north end and a showroom at the south corner. Pilasters with cast stone Art Deco plinth bases and capitals flank the garage bays, both of which have been slightly reduced in size to accommodate modern, roll-up, aluminum-and-glass garage doors. The southern bay also encompasses a single-leaf plate-glass door. The corner showroom's display windows have been enclosed with a kneewall and horizontal bands of tinted windows in keeping with the current office function. Awnings shelter the windows. The south elevation, which faces Nash Street, includes two additional garage bays matching those on the façade. The 1960s, windowless, concrete block rear addition is sheathed with variegated-brick veneer on the Nash Street elevation.

Sanborn maps show a two-story dwelling and four outbuildings at this location in 1923 and an auto service station on this lot in 1949. A rear parking area separated the service station from a two-story dwelling on a narrow lot facing Nash Street; the dwelling was still standing in 1949 but was gone by 1956. The building's rear addition was constructed after 1956. City directories list the Firestone Service Station at the northeast corner of South Church and Nash Streets from 1930 through 1940; the building has a 235 South Church Street address by 1945. Firestone remained in the building through the district's period of significance. The 1965 listing is for "Firestone Stores: Tires, Home, and Auto Parts."

Vacant Lot, 401 S. Church Street

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S. Church Street, West Side

Fire Engine Company No. 2, 1924, ca. 1930, ca. 1955, Contributing Building 404 S. Church Street

The Wilson architecture firm of Benton and Benton designed this two-story, brick, Mediterranean Revival-style fire station constructed by D. J. Rose in 1924. Fire Company No. 2 built more modern facilities on South Grace Street in the 1970s and this building then served as Marks Brothers garage.¹⁶

A bracketed, tile pent roof surmounts the façade and a cast stone surround frames the two garage bays. Decorative cast stone bands serve as the second-story windows' sills and lintels and brick parquetry panels with original sconces dated 1924 flank the windows. The entrance on the north elevation has been modified, but retains a bracketed tile pent hood. All of the building's windows have been replaced.

The one-story wing at the fire station's southwest corner was originally a freestanding building containing two rooms on the north side labeled "fire alarm headquarters" and a large room on the south side that served as a hose-drying area. The building appears on the 1949 update to the 1923 Sanborn map; its stepped parapet, low gable roof, and corbelled cornice suggest a circa 1930 construction date. A one-story flat-roofed addition extends from the fire station's northwest corner. This addition appears on the 1956 update to the 1923 Sanborn map. The addition's southeast corner serves as a hyphen between the fire station and the circa 1930 building and provides an auxiliary entrance on the south elevation.

Summerlin House, ca. 1895, Contributing Building 416 S. Church Street

The two-story, L-shaped, weatherboarded, Queen Anne-style Summerlin House has a projecting gabled cutaway bay on the façade's north end and a one-story gabled rear ell. Decorative wood shingles, bargeboards, pendants, brackets, and windows encompassing a rectangular central sash flanked by two small square four-pane sash ornament all of the main block's gables, including two decorative gables on the front and rear roof slopes. An elaborate sawn and turned porch frieze, balustrade, and posts characterize the one-story hip-roofed front porch. The unusual porch balustrade consists of two rows of short turned balusters surmounted by a pierced arcaded band and a molded handrail. Sawnwork brackets connect the porch posts to a three-part frieze composed of an upper sawnwork guilloche chain band, a

¹⁶ Richard L. Mattson, *The History and Architecture of Nash County, North Carolina* (Nashville: Nash County Planning Department, 1987), 303.

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central spindle band, and sawtooth trim flanked by small dropped pendants. The single-bay upper porch is more simply ornamented with turned posts, balusters, and a spindle frieze. The double-leaf front door and transom is intact, but has been covered with particle board, as have most of the original two-over-two sash on the first floor. Two tall brick chimneys with corbelled stacks pierce the metal roof. The house rests on brick piers infilled with brick lattice on the façade and solid brick sections elsewhere.

The rear ell has an auxiliary entrance on the north elevation and a shed porch on the south elevation, both of which have been temporarily boarded up to discourage vandalism. The south porch has a pantry at the western end and a modern shed-roofed entrance porch. A tall brick chimney with a corbelled stack and a pedimented dormer pierce the metal roof. The west gable end encompasses decorative wood shingles, a bracket, and a triangular louvered vent.

The house retains original interior features including beadboard ceilings, plaster walls, molded window and door surrounds, and wood floors. The central hall has high beadboard wainscoting and an Eastlake-style staircase with a foliated newel post, sunburst ornamentation on the stringer, and an elaborate turned balustrade. The two parlors flanking the central hall feature Victorian-era mantels with sawn and turned decoration. The two upstairs bedrooms have post-and-lintel mantels.¹⁷

A glazed door at the end of the central hall provides access to the rear ell's enclosed porch, which leads to the dining room and kitchen. The dining room features a beadboard ceiling and wainscoting, a post-and-lintel mantel, a built-in china cabinet with stained-glass doors, and wood floors. The kitchen is more austere, retaining plaster walls, a post-and-lintel mantel, and five-panel doors.¹⁸

The Summerlin House is the only surviving dwelling that was constructed during Rocky Mount's 1890s boom period on Church Street, once an elite residential avenue lined with the large homes of leading citizens. The original owner of this ca. 1895 house is unknown, but Isaac W. Bass, a farmer, resided in the house from circa 1908 through circa 1915. Subsequent occupants include Atlantic Coastline Transfer Station employees Alfred J. and Charles C. Wamsley in 1920. John Truitt owned the dwelling in the early 1930s and was the proprietor of the Truitt Boarding House. H. Oscar Summerlin, who operated the Summerlin Funeral Home which stood next door at 422 S. Church Street, purchased the property in 1940. The Summerlin family occupied the house through the late 1990s, when Preservation Rocky Mount purchased the dwelling in hopes of selling it with protective covenants.¹⁹

¹⁷ Ibid.¹⁸ Ibid.¹⁹ Jean Bailey, Summerlin House Study List application, 1999. On file at the North Carolina State Historic

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Shed, ca. 1980, Noncontributing Building

One-story, weatherboarded, gable-roofed shed with an entrance on the north elevation.

Coastline Street

Railway Express Agency Building, ca. 1930, 1998, Contributing Building 107-111 Coastline Street

The one-story brick building is executed in five-to-one common bond with concrete coping. The stepped parapet façade (north elevation) features a double-leaf entrance flanked by sidelights and a transom. Metal brackets support the corrugated-metal, shed-roofed hood over the entrance. A decorative header band surrounds the new "Rocky Mount Bus Station" sign. One large picture window and two windows with paired six-over-one sash illuminate the All-Aboard Restaurant.

Deep overhanging canopies, constructed as part of the rehabilitation project, shelter the loading dock on the east side and bus passenger loading on the west elevation. The loading dock (east) elevation has a series of square windows with six-pane sash and several entrances. The west elevation has four six-over-one sash windows at the north end, three modern double-leaf glass doors set in aluminum frames with sidelights and transoms, and two original double-leaf wood doors with diagonal-board panels below six glazed panes at the south end. A new gable-roofed, four-bay, steel canopy shelters an additional bus-loading area adjacent to the south elevation.

The building's interior features the original exposed wood post-and-beam support system, tall wood wainscoting, and five-horizontal-panel doors. A new tile floor, HVAC ductwork, and wood benches have been installed, but are in keeping with the building's historic character.

This ca. 1930 building originally housed the Railway Express Agency's Rocky Mount office. The building is just south of the train station and historically shared the long loading platform on the west side of the railroad tracks. The City of Rocky Mount acquired the building in 1995 and rehabilitated it to serve as the Rocky Mount Bus Station in 1998. The Winston-Salem architecture firm of Phillips and Oppermann won a NCAIA Tower award for the rehabilitation plans. Charles Phillips was the project architect, Barry Rakes served as the project manager, and Turn-Key Contractors the general contractor.

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Falls Road, East Side

Phillips Body Shop, ca. 1925, 1930, Contributing Building 357 Falls Road

This one-story circa 1925 brick garage has a circa 1930s stuccoed Art Deco office and three-bay garage addition on the south elevation. The circa 1925 garage has a hip roof, curved rafter ends, and a brick interior chimney with a corbelled stack. Large multi-pane windows and transoms on the north and west elevations illuminate the interior, which is accessed through modern roll-up garage doors on the west elevation and at the northeast corner. The circa 1930s garage has Art Deco buttresses, a pent roof, metal hopper windows, and modern roll-up garage doors. A fabric awning shelters the office's central entrance and plate glass windows.

Sanborn maps indicate that this triangular parcel flanked by North Church and Hickory Streets and Falls Road was vacant in 1917. By 1923, a garage with a 347 to 353 Falls Roads address occupied the parcel's southern corner. By 1949, the garage pictured on the 1923 Sanborn map had been replaced by a filling station with a 353 Falls Road address and an auto repair shop at 357 Falls Road. The filling station and auto repair shop, which were set back further north from the corner, have the same footprint as the existing buildings. The building function remained the same over time, although ownership changed.

The 1930 city directory lists Charles L. Bonney, auto sales, at 351-357 Falls Road, and Holbrook Motor Company at that address in 1936 and 1940. In 1950, Pittman's Esso Servicecenter appears at 351 and Rocky Mount Willys Co. (autos) at 357. Pittman's Esso remained at 351 until around 1960, when it became Lane's Esso Servicecenter. Moore and Phillips Auto Body Shop was at 357 from 1955 through 1965; a "Phillips Body Shop" sign still remains on the south elevation.

East Goldleaf Street

Vacant Lot, 207 East Goldleaf Street

Vacant Lot, 209 East Goldleaf Street

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Ivy Street, North Side

Holy Hope Episcopal Church, ca. 1910s, 1930s, 1950s, Contributing Building 200 Ivy Street

This front-gable-roofed, weatherboarded, Gothic Revival-style church has a corner belltower with a pyramidal steeple and a cross finial, curved rafter ends, diamond-shaped windows, and a bracketed, gabled hood above the double-leaf entrance. Pointed-arch windows illuminate the sanctuary. A one-story gabled ell extends from the north elevation and a gabled wing projects from the ell's east elevation. A bracketed, shed-roofed hood shelters the pointed-arch door that provides access to the building's north end from the gabled wing. A concrete block addition constructed after 1956 wraps around the rear ell and wing.

According to local funeral home director, C. C. Stokes, who owned this building at one time, the church was erected to serve the Holy Hope Episcopal congregation in Spring Hope and was moved to its current Rocky Mount location in the 1930s. City directories list the church at this address in 1940. The church is labeled "Episcopal Mission" on the 1949 updates to the 1923 Sanborn map, and is listed as Holy Hope Episcopal Church in city directories. Mr. Stokes used the building as a mortuary chapel and sold it to a local minister by 1980.

House, ca. 1940, Contributing Building 204 Ivy Street

One-story, front-gable-roofed, weatherboarded shotgun with a metal roof, exposed rafter ends, and an inset front porch supported by turned posts.

This shotgun first appears on the 1949 updates to the 1923 Sanborn map. The first city directory listing is in 1940, when Bessie M. Allen was in residence. William H. Battle, a laborer, occupied the house from 1942 through 1960; Mrs. Flora P. Battle resided at this address in 1965.

Duplex, ca. 1933, Contributing Building 206-208 Ivy Street

One-story, front-gable-roofed, weatherboarded duplex with a metal roof, exposed rafter ends, an inset front porch supported by square posts, four-over-four sash, and a small shed-roofed rear addition.

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This duplex first appears on the 1949 updates to the 1923 Sanborn map. The first city directory listing is for 208 in 1936, which was vacant. W. David Phippen occupied 206 in 1940; Frank Porter, a janitor at the YMCA, and his wife Alice were in residence from circa 1950 to 1955 and Sidney Ricks in 1960 and 1965.

House, ca. 1915, Contributing Building 212 Ivy Street

Two-story hip-roofed foursquare with a central decorative front gable, a standing-seam metal roof, and a hip-roofed front porch supported by turned and square posts. A projecting hip-roofed bay on the west elevation shelters an auxiliary entrance. The house has been sheathed in German vinyl siding, covering small square windows in the central gable and on the west elevation. Some of the original two-over-two sash windows and the front door have been replaced since 1979.

This dwelling originally had a 210 Ivy Street address; it changed to 212 between 1923 and 1930. Sanborn maps indicate that this location was vacant in 1912; a two-story dwelling appears in 1917. City directories list Nathaniel Lawrence as the occupant in 1930 and Betty Lawrence in 1934 and 1936. Rebecca J. Lawrence owned and occupied the house in 1940; Allen P. Lawrence, a helper at Railway Express Agency, and his wife Ruby were the owners and occupants in 1950 and 1955. Betty J. Fryer resided at this address in 1958, Joe Suggs in 1960, and Coley Benjamin in 1965.

Ivy Street, South Side

Vacant Lot, 207 Ivy Street

W. T. Grimes and Sons Barber Shop, ca. 1958, Contributing Building 211 Ivy Street

One-story brick commercial building with metal casement windows and terra cotta coping.

This location, the west end of a lot encompassing the two-story dwelling at 216 Atlantic Avenue, was vacant in 1917. By 1923, a square building labeled "auto repairing" had been constructed at 209 Ivy Street. That building was subdivided by 1949, and included storage in the east half, which had a 211 Ivy Street address. The 1950 City Directory indicates that 209-211 functioned as storage for Sorrels Funeral Home. There is no listing for this address in 1955, and the location is vacant on the 1956 Sanborn map. W. T. Grimes and Sons opened a barber shop at 211 Ivy Street by 1958, and by 1965 Keyes Shoe Shop

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also operated at that location. The building currently serves as First National Unity Home Care.

SE. Main Street

Union Bus Station, 1951, Contributing Building 401 SE. Main Street

One-story brick-veneered bus station with a distinctive winged metal canopy that extends from the south elevation to shelter the bus loading area. Double-leaf entrances provided access to the waiting room and restaurant and the baggage and express areas. Metal casement windows illuminate the building.

The bus station first appears on the 1956 Sanborn map with the notation that it was constructed in 1951 and has a concrete floor, a steel deck roof, and steel columns and beams. In 1958, Carolina Coach Company, Seashore Transportation Company, and the Bus Terminal Restaurant are also listed at this address.

Shed, 1951, Contributing Building

One-story gabled-roofed shed with an entrance on the north elevation.

Rose Street, North Side

Memorial Hospital, 1937, Contributing Building 224 Rose Street

This two-story, brick, flat-roofed, E-shaped building reflects the austerity of depression-era construction and the influence of the Art Deco style. Cast stone surrounds distinguish both Rose Street entrances; fluted pilasters flank the central entrance and embellish the building's corners. A cast stone panel inscribed with "Memorial Hospital" and two basketweave brick panels surmount the central entrance. Cast stone bands wrap around the building above and below the second-story windows; all of the double-hung sash have been replaced with tinted fixed sash.

Dr. M. L. Stone and Dr. J. A. Speight constructed this private ten-bed hospital in 1937. Dr. J. P. Bunn joined the practice in 1938, and the hospital became known as the Speight, Stone, and Bunn Clinic. The name was changed to Memorial Hospital when Dr. O. E. Bell became associated with the practice in 1946. Dr. S. E. Way joined the staff in 1950, Dr. L. W. Roberson in 1951, and Dr. L. O. Stone in 1957. The kitchen and operating room were remodeled in 1951, and the number of beds increased to twenty-five

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in 1954 and forty in 1957.²⁰ The hospital served both white and African American patients.

Sorsby's Alley, West Side

Commercial Building, ca. 1945, Contributing Building 120 Sorsby's Alley

One-story brick commercial building executed in five-to-one common bond. The upper portion of the Sorsby's Alley façade has been stuccoed and all of the building's windows have been replaced. A roll-up garage door and a single-leaf entrance provide access from Sorsby's Alley.

This building first appears on the 1949 updates to the 1923 Sanborn map and is labeled "tin shop."

Tarboro Street

Caddell Motors, ca. 1948, Contributing Building 256 Tarboro Street

Tall, one-story, concrete-block service station with a projecting one-story wing on the south elevation. The main block has a stepped parapet, metal industrial sash, and garage doors on the north and south elevations. The projecting wing has two entrances on its west elevation. Two metal-sash windows flank the northern entrance under a metal awning and a flat parapet. The southern entrance is a single-leaf plate-glass door set in a plate-glass curtain wall that wraps around the wing's south end below a metal cornice. Most of the south elevation's windows and the three small rectangular windows at the east elevation's north end have been covered with particle board.

Sanborn maps illustrate that a one-story dwelling occupied this location during the first decades of the twentieth century. City directories list a residence at this address in 1945 and Caddell Motors in 1948. An auto sales and service building with steel trusses, brick pilasters, and a concrete floor is shown at this location on the 1949 Sanborn map.

²⁰ "Hospitals today are far cry from turn of century," *Rocky Mount Telegram*, May 14, 1967.

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East Thomas Street, North Side

Vacant Lot

Vacant Lot

Service Station, ca. 1935, Contributing Building 216 E. Thomas Street

Small one-story brick service station with metal industrial sash and stovepipe chimney. The low gabled roof is a later addition.

Sanborn maps show a one-story dwelling at this location through 1923. City directories list a residence at this address in 1930, Biggs Service Station in 1936 and 1940, and the Austin Plummer Filling Station in 1945. The 1949 map illustrates a one-story filling station at the south end of an auto repair complex; by 1956 only the filling station is extant.

E. Thomas Street, South Side

Vacant Lot

A & S Service Station, ca. 1950, 1970s, Contributing Building 211 E. Thomas Street

One-story stuccoed concrete block service station with a small projecting one-story brick wing on the southeast corner. Plate glass windows delineate the office at the main block's northeast corner; four garage bays with roll-up doors extend to the west. A low side-gable roof shelters the one-story 1970s wing; plate glass windows illuminate the interior.

Sanborn maps illustrate that this lot was vacant in 1901; by 1907 a one-story dwelling occupied the site. The house originally had a 128 Atlantic Avenue address; it was changed to 124 by 1912. The house was vacant in 1948. A concrete block filling station replaced the dwelling between 1949 and 1952, when A & S Service Station is listed at this address. The building currently houses Quality "A" Auto Sales and Jones Barber Shop.

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Boundary Decrease

The following buildings have been demolished since the district was listed in the National Register. As they were located on the outer edges of the district, they have been excluded from the revised district boundaries.

Smith & Works Warehouse, ca. 1940, Demolished Building
210 N. Church Street

House, 1900, Demolished Building
313 S. Church Street

Rocky Mount Sanitarium, 1913, 1920, 1937, Demolished Building
144 Coastline Street

Amoco Station, ca. 1930, Demolished Building
105 W. Goldleaf Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, Demolished Building
210 Hill Street

Mangum Warehouse No. 2, ca. 1935, Demolished Building
303 NE. Main Street

Alcocke & Henry, Inc Building, ca. 1918, Demolished Building
131 Nash Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1918, Demolished Building
137-139 Nash Street

Commercial Building, 1925, Demolished Building
143 Nash Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1900, Demolished Building
122 Sunset Avenue

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**Commercial Building, ca. 1905, Demolished Building
130 Sunset Avenue**

**Commercial Building, ca. 1905, Demolished Building
132 Sunset Avenue**

**Centre Theater, ca. 1925, Demolished Building
138 Sunset Avenue**

**Commercial Building, ca. 1915, Demolished Building
215 Tarboro Street**

**Commercial Building, ca. 1920, Demolished Building
219-221 Tarboro Street**

**Commercial Building, ca. 1929, Demolished Building
225-227 Tarboro Street**

**Commercial Building, ca. 1917, Demolished Building
224-226 Tarboro Street**

**Commercial Building, ca. 1925, Demolished Building
230-232 Tarboro Street**

**Commercial Building, ca. 1925, Demolished Building
234 Tarboro Street**

**Commercial Building, ca. 1907, Demolished Building
235 Tarboro Street**

**Commercial Building, ca. 1922, Demolished Building
239 Tarboro Street**

**Russell's Central Service Station, ca. 1965, Demolished Building
206 W. Thomas Street**

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Central Café, ca. 1965, Demolished Building
212 W. Thomas Street

Rocky Mount Physical Therapy Clinic, ca. 1906, Demolished Building
222 W. Thomas Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Demolished Building
125 S. Washington Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1915, Demolished Building
127 S. Washington Street

Hobart Sales and Service, ca. 1930, Demolished Building
133 S. Washington Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1910, Demolished Building
143-147 S. Washington Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1920, Demolished Building
151-157 S. Washington Street

Commercial Building, ca. 1901, Demolished Building
163-165 S. Washington Street

Nichols Hall, ca. 1905, Demolished Building
171 S. Washington Street

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Section 8. Statement of Significance

The Rocky Mount Central City Historic District was listed in the National Register in 1980 for its historical and architectural significance from 1877 through 1930. The passage of time and the numerous physical changes that have taken place within the district over the past thirty years justify a reassessment of the period of significance and boundaries. Therefore, this nomination serves as an amendment to the original document. The inventory list updates the status of the resources within the 1980 historic district, reflecting the current standards for determining contributing and noncontributing resources and the period of significance's expansion to 1961. The nomination also expands and reduces the district's boundaries. The boundary increase consists of properties at the district's edges that were constructed between 1895 and 1961, including an important group of buildings associated with Rocky Mount's African American community. The boundary decrease encompasses demolished resources at the original historic district's edges.

The Rocky Mount Central City Historic District, as originally listed, contained 205 resources, primarily historic commercial and industrial buildings, at the city's geographic center and met National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture, Commerce, Industry, and Transportation. This nomination provides additional documentation to expand the period of significance for properties within the original boundaries from 1930 to 1961, the year the Carleton House Motor Inn and Restaurant was erected at 209-215 N. Church Street, as such resources reflect the continued development of Rocky Mount as a commercial and industrial center. The Carleton House Motor Inn's construction manifests the owners' continued confidence in Rocky Mount's importance as a northeastern North Carolina trade center, as well as the need for additional lodging to house tourists and other travelers. Although Rocky Mount's economy has remained strong since 1961, the activities and architecture associated with downtown since 1961 are not of exceptional significance, and Criteria Consideration G is not being claimed.

The locally-significant Rocky Mount Central City Historic District Boundary Increase meets National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture, Commerce, and Ethnic Heritage: Black. The period of significance begins in 1895, the construction date of the expansion area's oldest building, the Summerlin House, at 416 S. Church Street, and continues through 1961, by which time African American physician Joseph W. Parker occupied his new office at 224 Atlantic Avenue. The boundary increase includes thirty-two properties on the district's edges: seven commercial buildings, eight dwellings, five outbuildings, four service stations, two churches, two funeral homes, Union Bus Station, the Railway Express Agency Building, and Memorial Hospital. The commercial and institutional buildings exhibit architectural influences ranging from standard Commercial Style to the Gothic Revival, Art Deco, and Modernist styles. The circa 1895 Queen Anne-style Summerlin House, located at the district's southwest

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corner, is the only surviving dwelling on South Church Street, once an elite residential avenue lined with the large homes of leading citizens. The other seven dwellings—two Queen Anne cottages, two vernacular two-story houses, a bungalow, a front-gable duplex, and a shotgun—were constructed between 1905 and 1940 in the two blocks bounded by East Goldleaf Street on the north, Albemarle Avenue on the west, Atlantic Avenue on the east, and East Thomas Street on the south. This area, which comprises roughly five acres of the approximately ten-acre boundary increase, contains resources historically associated with Rocky Mount's African American community. As many business owners and employees lived within walking distance of the downtown commercial and industrial area, the dwellings in the Central City Historic District boundary expansion were both rentals and owner-occupied and housed working-class and professional residents.

Since 1980, sixty-nine buildings included in the original district have been demolished. Thirty-one of those buildings were on the district's edges, and the parcels where they once stood, most of which are now parking lots, have thus been excluded from the revised boundaries. The most concentrated losses were at the district's northern end, where only two warehouses and two factory complexes related to the once-thriving tobacco industry still stand, and along Washington and Tarboro streets, once completely lined with commercial buildings. The remaining thirty-eight demolished properties stood on commercial blocks that remain substantially intact. Demolished or heavily altered buildings within the original district's core area cannot be removed according to National Register regulations, as the district was listed prior to December 13, 1980. Despite the loss of historic resources, the Rocky Mount Central City Historic District retains a good degree of integrity, with seventy-seven percent of its 181 resources categorized as contributing.

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Historic Background and Ethnic Heritage and Commerce Context

As detailed in the original Rocky Mount Central City Historic District nomination, the introduction of brightleaf tobacco as a cash crop, the subsequent founding of the Rocky Mount Tobacco Market in 1887, and the opening of the Atlantic Coastline Railroad's freight yard and repair shops in 1893 set the stage for an unprecedented period of growth and development in Rocky Mount.²¹ The business district grew up on either side of the railroad that runs through the center of town and serves as the county line. Industrial concerns including tobacco factories, Emerson Shops, Rocky Mount Mills, and Rocky Mount Ironworks, as well as the banks, construction companies, restaurants, and retail outlets that followed these primary economic engines attracted an influx of laborers, resulting in a dramatic population increase from 357 residents in 1870 to 12,742 in 1920, approximately half of whom were African American.²²

The population increase fueled a need for additional housing, and dwellings for both the elite and working classes were built near the central business district. Merchants, tradesmen, industrialists, bankers, doctors, dentists, and lawyers were among those who erected businesses, offices, and residences. Rocky Mount architect-contractor John C. Stout and architect Henry S. Poole designed and constructed elaborate Queen Anne-style homes on Church Street, Falls Road, Western Avenue, and Sunset Avenue between 1890 and 1910, almost all of which have been demolished. Mill workers occupied modest shotguns, saddlebag dwellings, L-plan houses and hip-roofed cottages in villages adjacent to manufacturing complexes.²³

The booming economy provided unprecedented opportunities for Rocky Mount's businessmen and professionals. African American entrepreneurs established a vibrant commercial district on East Thomas Street at the northeast end of downtown in the 1910s and 1920s. Many business owners, employees, and customers lived within walking distance of the downtown commercial and industrial area. East Thomas Street's stores, offices, restaurants, and movie theaters drew African American patrons from surrounding neighborhoods and throughout eastern North Carolina.

East Thomas Street was primarily residential until around 1915, when the first section of the two-story brick Douglas Building was erected to house African American businesses where the Hotel Woodward

²¹ Kate Ohno, "Rocky Mount Central City Historic District," National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1980. The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad freight yard and repair shops complex was known as the "shops" for many years and eventually named Emerson Shops in honor of one of the railroad company's presidents.

²² Leon E. Truesdell, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Census of Population, Volume I, Characteristics of the Population, Part A, Number of Inhabitants* (Washington, D. C. Government Printing Office, 1942), 772.

²³ Richard L. Mattson, *The History and Architecture of Nash County*, 23-26.

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had formerly stood at the corner of NE Main and East Thomas streets. Pharmacist Junius Daniel Douglas and physician Leonard P. Armstrong operated a drugstore in the corner storefront (201 NE Main Street). Additional storefronts were constructed on the building's north end by 1930, when dentist William M. Sessoms, physician Roland T. Winstead, barbers James A. Hannons and Joseph S. Hines, Union Transfer Company, Eagle Life Insurance Company, North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, Stokes and Daniels Billiards, Wimberly Brothers, undertakers Sorrell and Cooper, and taxi drivers Lewis D. Bellamy, Pone Bulluck, and Johnson McClamy rented office space.²⁴

Other commercial buildings soon replaced modest one- and two-story dwellings along East Thomas Street. Stokes and Daniels Mortuary, established in 1923, had a 116 E. Thomas Street address in 1930. James Westray sold cigars at the Rocky Mount Pool Room at 120 E. Thomas Street, which included a small barbershop operated by Horace Wade. Black's Shoe Shop and the Classical Revival-style Savoy Theater, later known as the Booker-T Theater, also stood between the Douglas Building and the Burnett Building, constructed around 1925 at the corner of East Thomas Street and Albemarle Avenue. Lawyer Champ F. Rich, dentist James E. Pittman, physicians Peter W. Burnett and George W. Bulluck, Bankers Fire Insurance Company, and National Benefit Life Insurance Company had offices in the Burnett Building. The Burnett Drug Company occupied one of the storefronts, and the Knights of King Solomon met upstairs. The one-story commercial building on the east side of Albemarle Avenue was also constructed circa 1925, and housed the Eureka Barber Shop, Star Café, Hines Pressing Club, and Pittman's Funeral Home in 1930.²⁵

The stock market crash of October 1929 and the subsequent economic depression slowed Rocky Mount's rapid growth. Little new construction took place in the early 1930s, particularly in the downtown area, and some small businesses did not survive. Rocky Mount factories and mills remained open, however, and in many cases increased production, as the national market for tobacco products and cotton remained strong.

Rocky Mount's tobacco market, known as the "mother...of all Eastern North Carolina markets," experienced a fifty-four percent increase in the quantity of tobacco processed from 1934 to 1935 and an overall increase of approximately eighty percent between 1930 and 1936. Tobacco warehouses and factories owned by Fenners, Cobb and Foxhall, Easley, Magnum, Planters, Imperial Tobacco, Rick and

²⁴ Rocky Mount Sanborn maps, 1912, 1917, 1923; *Hill's Rocky Mount City Directory* (Richmond: Hill's Directory Company, 1930), 400.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

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Thorpe Tobacco, and American Tobacco stood at the north end of the downtown commercial district. Market owners paid farmers \$20.40 a pound for tobacco, slightly above the state average, expending over eight million dollars a year in the early 1930s.²⁶

Farmers also brought livestock to Rocky Mount to sell. The Rocky Mount livestock market opened in 1931 and the Chamber of Commerce promoted livestock shows beginning in 1938. Farmers reinvested much of their money locally, at more than five hundred retail establishments. Rocky Mount offered diverse entertainment and recreational opportunities at venues such as theaters, athletic fields, a stadium, a bowling alley, parks, and the library.²⁷

The North Carolina Emergency Relief Administration (NCERA) attempted to mitigate the impact of economic hardship in Rocky Mount in the early 1930s by funding civic projects such as the construction of a municipal airport, road improvements, water and sewer line installation, mosquito control, surplus commodity distribution, school maintenance and repair, privy construction, landscaping, and crop harvesting.²⁸ The NCERA and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) reduced food preservation costs by erecting facilities such as the McGowan Community Cannery in Rocky Mount, where residents could bring their own food and tins and collaborate on the canning process.²⁹ Other local WPA projects included building a power plant and digging a small lake, which became the central feature of a city park, in 1935.³⁰

African American business owners erected two buildings on East Thomas Street around 1935, the Art Deco-style Manhattan Theater and a small one-story brick service station at the corner of Atlantic Avenue. In 1936, the City of Rocky Mount purchased the three-story Masonic Hall and Opera House at 131 NE Main Street, constructed from 1901 to 1904 by D. J. Rose, and renovated it to serve as the Municipal Building. The courtroom and jails were substantially complete and most city staff moved into

²⁶ George P. Arrington, "Rocky Mount is Mother of East North Carolina Markets," *Raleigh News and Observer*, August 27, 1936; "Rocky Mount Facts," *Raleigh News and Observer*, August 27, 1936.

²⁷ William E. Bobbitt, *A Brief History of Rocky Mount* (Rocky Mount: Rocky Mount Chamber of Commerce, April 1, 1950), 15.

²⁸ J. S. Kirk, Walter A. Cutter and Thomas W. Morse, ed., *Emergency Relief in North Carolina* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Company, 1936), 476.

²⁹ Anita Price Davis, *North Carolina During the Great Depression: A Documentary Portrait of a Decade* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, Inc, Publishers, 2003), 104.

³⁰ Monika S. Fleming, *Images of America: Rocky Mount and Nash County* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1998), 94.

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their offices by September 1937.³¹ The new Art Deco-style façade expressed the most fashionable and up-to-date architectural taste and remained a downtown landmark until its demolition in the 1980s.

The Thomas Hackney Braswell Memorial Library expansion was another 1930s civic improvement project. Dr. Mark Russell Braswell donated the land and funds for the library's construction in 1923 in memory of his son Thomas (1895-1907). The one-story, brick Classical Revival-style building features a pedimented entrance portico with limestone columns with Ionic capitals. Flanking wings and a large rear addition were constructed in 1938, followed by large wings on the east and west elevations in 1961, a children's library in 1966, and a small addition on the southeast corner and interior renovations in 1985.³²

The economy started to recover by the late 1930s, and in 1939 Rocky Mount had 38 grocery stores and 96 other stores that sold food, 39 filling stations, 44 restaurants, 5 bars, 33 clothing and shoe stores, 13 drug stores, 12 furniture stores, 3 hardware stores, 5 household appliance and radio stores, 5 jewelry stores, 5 feed stores, 4 lumber and building material dealers, and 8 fuel and ice dealers. Twenty-eight manufacturing establishments employed an average of 1,241 workers and generated almost seven million dollars worth of products. Rocky Mount's population grew almost twenty percent over the course of the decade, numbering 25,568 in 1940.³³

Many county residents served in World War II, and those left behind were occupied with the war effort in a variety of ways, from filling vacant positions in local mills and factories to participating in bond drives and other volunteer efforts. Military trains carried thousands of servicemen through Rocky Mount, which served as a transfer station during the war years. The tobacco industry remained strong; fourteen tobacco warehouses, ten redrying plants, and nine purchasing companies stood in downtown Rocky Mount by 1948. Sixty-six manufacturing establishments employed 5,419 men and 3,212 women, who produced "Venetian blinds, lumber products, fertilizer, cottonseed products, brick, veneers, ice, ice cream, dairy products, bottled drinks, stock, feed, flour, and meal." Approximately seven hundred stores served local

³¹ Kate Mearns, *Central City Historic Buildings Inventory, Rocky Mount, North Carolina* (Rocky Mount: Central City Revitalization Corporation, 1979); "New Municipal Building is Ready for Occupancy," *The Rocky Mount Herald*, September 3, 1937.

³² C. Rudolph Knight, "Thomas Hackney Braswell Memorial Library Local Landmark Report," 2004, on file at the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh.

³³ Fred A. Gosnell, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Census of Business, Volume I, Retail Trade: 1939, Part 3, Kinds of Business by Areas, States, Counties, and Cities* (Washington, D. C. Government Printing Office, 1941), 744; Thomas J. Fitzgerald, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Manufactures: 1939, Volume 3, Reports for States and Outlying Areas* (Washington, D. C. Government Printing Office, 1942), 745; Leon E. Truesdell, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940*, 772.

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and regional residents. Six movie theaters, seventeen parks, a golf course, two radio stations, and the library provided entertainment and recreational opportunities. Almost five thousand Rocky Mount children attended twelve public schools.³⁴

Rocky Mount's building stock increased as resources became more readily available at the end of World War II. The city issued building permits for new construction valued at \$1,667,750 in 1946.³⁵ Most of the central city business district was built out by the late 1940s, but a few dwellings and vacant lots remained on the outlying edges of primarily commercial blocks. New commercial buildings and parking lots continued to fill those locations. A one-story concrete block service station replaced the dwelling at 256 Tarboro Street, Carolina Telephone and Telegraph erected a large three-story brick office building with Art Deco-style accents at 143 North Washington Street, and Dillon Supply expanded their material handling, sales, service, and parts services to the east side of South Washington Street circa 1948. There was also still room for expansion within some industrial complexes during this period. Thorpe and Ricks constructed a large one-story receiving department beside their Falls Road warehouse by 1949.

Rocky Mount's diverse industrial base helped the city weather a substantial economic challenge in the late 1940s when the Atlantic Coastline Railroad reorganized its operations. New administrator Champion McDowell Davis oversaw the modernization of Rocky Mount's Emerson Shops complex to rebuild passenger cars and head-end cars. The facility, which included paint and cabinet shops, operated through 1959, servicing an average of 180 cars a year.³⁶

Although Rocky Mount's population grew only slightly, to 27,697, by 1950, the local economy remained strong. Rocky Mount was one of the world's largest bright-leaf tobacco markets during the 1950s. Approximately eight million dollars-worth of swine and cattle were sold in Rocky Mount annually by that time, about one-third of the revenue generated from tobacco.³⁷ Industrial concerns including cotton, rayon, silk, and feed mills; mattress, fertilizer, cordage, plywood, and Venetian blind factories; a tank fabricating plant; and Atlantic Coastline Railroad's Emerson Shops employed 8,500 local residents.³⁸ American Bakeries opened "the largest and most modern of the 19 plants in the Merita chain" on the outskirts of Rocky Mount in April 1951 and Gary Steel Products Corporation established a Rocky Mount

³⁴ "Statistical Review of Rocky Mount, N. C.," *The Tarheel Woman*, January 1948, 5.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Jackson McQuigg, "Atlantic Coastline's Rocky Mount," *Trains*, May 1998, 73.

³⁷ Fleming, *Images of America: Rocky Mount and Nash County*, 8; Bobbitt, *A Brief History of Rocky Mount*, 15.

³⁸ *Hill's Rocky Mount City Directory* (Richmond: Hill Directory Co., Inc., 1952), 13-14.

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operation in 1952.³⁹

Business downtown was quite brisk, and city directories reflect few vacancies in available commercial space. The City of Rocky Mount issued building permits valued at over three million dollars in 1950, and several new buildings, some of which embraced the streamlined modern design aesthetic, were erected downtown.⁴⁰

Rocky Mount's location at the intersection of three major highways made tourism an important component of the local economy by the mid-twentieth century. Rocky Mount had four hotels and numerous motels by 1951, including six motor courts with 155 units constructed in the late 1940s.⁴¹ Most were Modernist in design, and the Carleton House Motor Inn and Restaurant at 209-215 N. Church Street, which opened on April 2, 1961 was no exception. A *Rocky Mount Evening Telegram* article published that day declared that the complex featured the "most up-to-date ideas in modern motel construction." Architects Shield and Wyatt designed the buildings, which are constructed of recycled variegated brick supplied by the Tar River Lumber Company. Mr. and Mrs. Carleton Noell of Rocky Mount and Mr. and Mrs. Kay Kyser of Chapel Hill funded the five-hundred-thousand-dollar construction and furnishing cost. Rocky Mount residents Nick and Mayo Boddie served as the first managers. The Boddie and Noell families subsequently incorporated as Boddie-Noell and were one of the first, and eventually the largest, Hardee's fast-food restaurant franchise owners.⁴² Boddie-Noell's Modernist Rocky Mount walkup Hardee's restaurant, which served as the prototype for Hardee's restaurants throughout the United States, opened at 320 N. Church Street in 1962 and was demolished in 2007.

Although many Rocky Mount buildings constructed during the late 1950s and early 1960s embraced the mid-century modern aesthetic, a few religious institutions looked to the past for design inspiration. The United Methodist Church partnered with the City of Rocky Mount to charter North Carolina Wesleyan College in 1956. The Braswell family donated two hundred acres north of central Rocky Mount to serve as the campus site and the college erected a series of Colonial Revival-style buildings. The college opened to students in 1960 and has graduated over seven thousand students from its liberal arts curriculum and vocational training programs.⁴³ The college has some facilities in downtown Rocky

³⁹ Charlie Joyner, "Rocky Mount: A Between-Wars Portrait," *Raleigh News and Observer*, March 9, 1951; R. Graham Dozier, "Rocky Mount Moved Forward in 1951," *Rocky Mount Evening Telegram*, January 1, 1952.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 11.

⁴¹ Charlie Joyner, "Rocky Mount: A Between-Wars Portrait," *Raleigh News and Observer*, March 9, 1951.

⁴² Carole Marsh, *The Hardee's Heritage: The past, present, and future* (Rocky Mount: Walker Ross Printing Company, 1976), 3.

⁴³ "The History of North Carolina Wesleyan College," http://www.ncwc.edu/about_ncwc/history.htm

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Mount; the Carleton House Motor Inn and Restaurant currently functions as a North Carolina Wesleyan College student dormitory.

The St. John A. M. E. Zion congregation also preferred more traditional architecture and erected a Gothic Revival-style sanctuary at 250 Atlantic Avenue. The congregation was established in 1886 and had previously worshipped in a one-story building with a two-story belltower at that location. The sanctuary originally faced Atlantic Avenue, but between 1923 and 1949 the church was moved west on the lot and rotated north to face East Goldleaf Street. By 1956 a sanctuary with the current footprint and two corner towers had been constructed at the original location on the corner. Photographs of Booker T. Washington High School classes in front of St. John A.M.E. Zion Church in the late 1950s indicate that the exterior was finished by that time. According to the pastor, Reverend Florence Pender, the church took many years to complete, during which time the congregation met in the basement. The church was dedicated in 1963 under the direction of Pastor D. L. Blakey and Bishop William A. Stewart.⁴⁴

Investment in downtown Rocky Mount remained strong until Tarrytown Mall opened in 1963, drawing customers away from the central business district.⁴⁵ Some large retailers—including Belk-Tyler, who did not vacate their downtown Rocky Mount stores and move to Golden East Mall until the 1980s—remained downtown, but many other businesses relocated to malls and shopping centers and the once vital central city commercial area began a slow decline.

In the late 1960s, the tobacco market and textile production slowed and Rocky Mount's economic base shifted to other industrial and manufacturing concerns. Many of the tobacco factories and warehouses at the Central City Historic District's north end were vacant for years before being demolished. Only the American Tobacco complex on Goldleaf Street is still used as a factory. A plaque inset in the corner of the two-story prizery reads "K. W. Coghill, Contractor & Builder, 1892," which makes this building the oldest existing tobacco processing plant in Rocky Mount.

Rocky Mount's downtown is currently experiencing a renaissance, as industrial, commercial, and transportation-related buildings are being successfully renovated. The Imperial Tobacco complex on Gay Street, west of American Tobacco, was recently rehabilitated to serve a new function. After flooding following Hurricane Floyd destroyed Rocky Mount's Children's Museum and Arts Center in September

⁴⁴ Florence Pender, interview with the author, 12/4/08; Photographs in the collection of the Booker T. Washington Alumni Museum, Rocky Mount.

⁴⁵ Bugs Barringer, Dot Barringer, and Lela Chesson, *Rocky Mount: A Pictorial History* (Norfolk, Virginia: The Donning Company, 1977), 151.

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1999, city council delineated the former Imperial Tobacco Company Processing Plant and the adjacent Thomas Hackney Braswell Memorial Library as the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences. The renovated complex is an outstanding example of the adaptive reuse of an industrial complex. The Rocky Mount Historic Preservation Commission designated the Imperial Tobacco Processing Plant and Thomas Hackney Braswell Memorial Library local landmarks in 2004.

Several downtown commercial buildings have been renovated over the past thirty years, and most have been privately-funded endeavors. Self-Help Credit Union rehabilitated the monumental five-story Rocky Mount National Bank building designed by the Washington, D. C. architecture firm of Milburn and Heister and constructed by D. J. Rose in 1918. The Rocky Mount Edgecombe County Economic Development Corporation (RMECDC) renovated a block of early twentieth-century commercial buildings on the west side of the one hundred block of South Washington Street, now called Harambee Square. The City of Rocky Mount is currently working with architects and developers on rehabilitation plans for buildings in the historically African American business district on East Thomas Street known as the Douglas Block.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation assisted with the extensive renovation of Rocky Mount's three-story brick Romanesque-style train depot. Originally an Atlantic Coast Line station, the building later served the Seaboard Coast Line. The depot, constructed in 1903 and expanded in 1911-1912 and 1916, was rehabilitated from 1997 to 2000 and continues to serve as Rocky Mount's train station. Office space, including that of the Rocky Mount Chamber of Commerce, occupies the second and third floors.⁴⁶

The train station historically shared a loading platform with the ca. 1930 Railway Express Agency Building located just to the south. The City of Rocky Mount acquired the Railway Express Agency Building in 1995 and rehabilitated it to serve as the Rocky Mount Bus Station in 1998. The Winston-Salem architecture firm of Phillips and Oppermann won an AIA award for the rehabilitation plans.

Rocky Mount's downtown revitalization is just beginning. The expanded Central City Historic District boundaries will allow an additional thirty properties to be recognized for their historic significance. Most of the National Register district was recently included in a local district by the same name, and the Rocky Mount Historic Districts Commission reviews all proposed construction projects within the boundaries to ensure that the district's character is maintained.

⁴⁶ "Rocky Mount Station," NCDOT Rail Division, Station Improvements,
<http://www.bytrain.org/istation.irockymount.html>.

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Architecture Context

Residential

The original Rocky Mount Central City Historic District National Register nomination included only one residence, a Queen Anne cottage at 313 South Church Street that has been demolished since 1980. The expansion area encompasses eight dwellings constructed between 1895 and 1940. The circa 1895 Queen Anne-style Summerlin House, located at the district's southwest corner, is the only surviving dwelling on South Church Street, once an elite residential avenue lined with the large homes of leading citizens.

The Queen Anne style reflected the increasingly elaborate architectural expression made possible by the industrial advances of the late nineteenth century. Steam-powered factories produced vast quantities of dimensional lumber and inexpensive millwork which was moved by rail throughout the country. Manufacturers such as the Rocky Mount Sash and Blind Company, who advertised in 1906 that "everything required in a building of wood can be furnished in this plant," supplied contractors with construction materials. Local and regional builders quickly incorporated mass-produced ornament, contrasting materials, and asymmetrical plans into their repertoires.⁴⁷

The two-story, weatherboarded, L-shaped, Summerlin House retains an elaborate sawn and turned porch frieze, balustrade, and posts that are among the most ornate Queen Anne-style porch elements in Rocky Mount. Intact interior features include beadboard ceilings, plaster walls, molded window and door surrounds, and wood floors. The central hall has high beadboard wainscoting and an Eastlake-style staircase with a foliated newel post, sunburst ornamentation on the stringer, and a complex turned balustrade. The two parlors flanking the central hall feature Victorian-era mantels with sawn and turned decoration.⁴⁸

The district expansion also includes two blocks—bounded by East Goldleaf Street on the north, Albemarle Avenue on the west, Atlantic Avenue on the east, and East Thomas Street on the south—that were historically associated with Rocky Mount's African American community. Seven early twentieth-century dwellings—two Queen Anne cottages, two vernacular two-story houses, a bungalow, a front-

⁴⁷ Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, portable edition (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 328; Richard L. Mattson, *The History and Architecture of Nash County*, 22.

⁴⁸ Jean Bailey, Summerlin House Study List application, 1999. On file at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh.

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gable duplex and a shotgun—stand on Ivy Street and Atlantic Avenue. All of these modest houses reflect forms and styles commonly found in residential neighborhoods during this period.

Mass-produced millwork brackets, porch posts, balusters, and decorative wood shingles were used to embellish the earliest dwellings, one-story Queen Anne cottages erected at 216 and 226 Atlantic Avenue around 1905. The circa 1910, two-story, hip-roofed, weatherboarded house at 216 Atlantic Avenue has a projecting two-story pedimented bay on the façade's south end, a hip-roofed front porch, original two-over-two sash, and a standing-seam metal roof. The circa 1915, two-story, hip-roofed foursquare at 212 Ivy Street exhibits a central decorative front gable, a standing-seam metal roof, and a hip-roofed front porch supported by turned and square posts. A one-and-one-half story frame bungalow with a clipped-side-gable roof, an inset front porch supported by tapered posts on brick piers, shed-roofed dormers on the front and rear roof slopes, exposed rafter ends, and triangular eave brackets replaced a row of three small duplexes at 236 Atlantic Avenue around 1920. The duplexes were comparable in size to the circa 1933 front-gable duplex at 206-208 Ivy Street and the circa 1940 shotgun at 204 Ivy Street, which retain original weatherboards, metal roofs, exposed rafter ends, and inset front porches. Similar dwellings filled the blocks until the last quarter of the twentieth century, but these seven are the only survivors. As many business owners and employees lived within walking distance of the downtown commercial and industrial area, the dwellings in the Central City Historic District boundary expansion were both rentals and owner-occupied and housed working-class and professional residents.

One of Rocky Mount's largest African American communities, Happy Hill, encompassed a densely-populated thirty-block area north of downtown by the 1930s. Investors constructed rows of almost identical shotgun, saddlebag, and hip-roofed houses along streets including Beal, Thomas, and Tillery to shelter seasonal tobacco factory and warehouse workers. Little Raleigh, a similar neighborhood on the south side of town, evolved during the early twentieth century to provide housing for African American railroad shop and lumber company employees. The neighborhood included approximately fifteen blocks of modest shotguns, saddlebag dwellings, and hip-roofed cottages bounded by Raleigh Road and Grace and Paul streets. The homes in the Central City Historic District Boundary Increase are comparable in form and style to those in Happy Hill and Little Raleigh. African American realtor and developer Frank W. Davis constructed more substantial Revival-style houses along East Thomas Street and East Grand Avenue east of Atlantic Avenue for Rocky Mount's successful African American professional class in the first decades of the twentieth century.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Richard L. Mattson, *The History and Architecture of Nash County*, 291-292; C. Rudolph Knight, "Rocky Mount African American Neighborhoods," 2004.

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Commercial/Institutional

Many of Rocky Mount's first commercial buildings, as indicated by the 1907 Bird's Eye View, Sanborn maps, and documentary photographs, were simply-finished one- and two-story weatherboarded structures with full-width front porches. These early buildings were quickly replaced during the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century building boom. New businesses capitalized on manufacturing growth and reflected their success in the construction of brick commercial buildings embellished with brick corbelling, arched windows, and cast-iron storefronts.

The Wilson architecture firm of Benton and Benton designed one of the expansion area's most architecturally-striking buildings, the two-story, brick, Mediterranean Revival-style Fire Station No. 2, constructed by D. J. Rose at 404 S. Church Street in 1924. The Mediterranean Revival style evokes villas on the Mediterranean coasts of France, Spain and Italy with their low-pitched hipped roofs covered with ceramic tiles, deep bracketed eaves, French doors, and symmetrical façades. Fire Station No. 2 reflects these characteristics in the bracketed, tile pent roofs surmounting the façade and the north elevation entrance. Decorative cast stone bands serve as the second-story windows' sills and lintels and brick parquetry panels with original sconces dated 1924 flank the windows.

Only a few new commercial buildings—predominantly projects underway before the stock market crash—were erected in Rocky Mount during the 1930s, and they represent a complete departure from ornate Victorian-era and Classical Revival architectural styles. The two-story brick office building constructed at 120 Howard Street around 1930, for example, manifests traditional Colonial Revival stylistic elements. Richard Guy Wilson recently defined the Colonial Revival as “the United States most popular and characteristic expression. Neither a formal style or a movement, Colonial Revival embodies an attitude that looks to the American past for inspiration and selects forms, motifs, and symbols for replication and reuse.”⁵⁰ The Howard Street office building has a pedimented portico supported by grouped Tuscan columns, an entrance flanked by sidelights and a transom, nine-over-nine sash, cast stone windows sills and keystones, and a denticulated cornice beneath a pent roof framed by stepped parapets.

In some cases, patterned masonry; sparingly-used tile, concrete, stone, or terra cotta insets; shaped parapets; and bands of large rectangular windows distinguish otherwise austere commercial buildings. The Railway Express Agency constructed a one-story brick office just south of the Atlantic Coastline Railroad Station around 1930. The building features a stepped parapet and a double-leaf entrance flanked by sidelights and a transom. Metal brackets support the corrugated-metal, shed-roofed hood over the

⁵⁰ Richard Guy Wilson, *The Colonial Revival House* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2004), 6.

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entrance. A decorative header band surrounds the new “Rocky Mount Bus Station” sign.

As the economy started to recover by the late 1930s, B. D. Rabil constructed a one-story flatiron building at 103 Marigold Street that served as City Lunch restaurant from 1938 through the 1980s. A small, recessed, arched panel above the corner entrance is inscribed “Rabil’s.” The roof parapet has arched sections above the corner entrance and at the centers of the north and west elevations. Shallow projecting bays with plate glass windows extend from the façade and the west elevation’s north end. Rabil also erected a one-story commercial building next door at 105 Marigold Street that initially functioned as an A & P grocery store.

Elements of the newly popular Art Deco style, born at the 1925 Paris Exposition of Decorative and Industrial Arts, were also reflected in Rocky Mount’s 1930s downtown buildings. Art Deco-style architecture embraced modernism through the use of smooth stone or stucco walls, setbacks or steps on the upper floors, a vertical emphasis, and stylized geometric decoration rendered in cast stone or metal alloys, often incorporating design motifs from Mayan, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and American Indian cultures. Movie theaters, retail establishments, service stations, and regional and national corporations utilized Art Deco stylistic elements to promote a modern image.⁵¹

Firestone erected a one-story variegated-brick commercial building with a garage and a showroom northwest of the railroad station at 231 S. Church Street circa 1930. The Firestone Store is simply executed, incorporating only modest embellishment in the form of pilasters with cast stone Art Deco plinth bases and capitals flanking the garage bays. The circa 1930 garage and office section of Phillip’s Body Shop at 357 Falls Road retains stuccoed walls, Art Deco-style buttresses, a pent roof, and metal hopper windows. The two-story, brick, Art Deco-style commercial building erected around 1930 at 122 Howard Street has Carrera glass framing the storefront, which is sheltered by a flat-roofed metal canopy. The second story’s central bay projects slightly and included a decorative brick panel over the metal casement window. Square cast stone panels are centered above the remaining four windows.

Other public buildings also reflect the influence of the Art Deco style. The one-and-one-half-story brick Manhattan Theater at 122 E. Thomas Street, constructed around 1935 at the heart of Rocky Mount’s African American business district, originally had a fluted section at the façade’s center below a stepped parapet, but it has been infilled with stucco. The austere, two-story, brick, 1937 Art Deco-style Memorial

⁵¹ Catherine W. Bishir. *North Carolina Architecture*, portable edition (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 481.

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Hospital at 224 Rose Street features cast stone surrounds at both Rose Street entrances and fluted pilasters flanking the central entrance and at the building's corners. A cast stone panel inscribed with "Memorial Hospital" and two basketweave brick panels surmount the central entrance. Cast stone bands wrap around the building above and below the second-story windows.

Remodeling was a pragmatic alternative to new construction during World War II due to building material shortages. The two-story, brick, early twentieth-century commercial building at 100 Northwest Main Street received an International-style façade circa 1940. The building was stuccoed, the storefront altered, and a tall, curved glass block window added to the façade's south corner at that time. Only a few new buildings were erected in the Central City Historic District during the war years. Architect Gordam Albott designed the one-story, brick, Modernist Stokes Mortuary at 207 Albemarle Avenue—which was completed in June 1941 and remodeled in 1953—for African American business leader C. C. Stokes. In the 1950s, Stokes Mortuary also served as a meeting place for an economic development corporation that focused on creating industrial jobs for Rocky Mount's African American community.⁵²

By the early 1950s, other Rocky Mount commercial buildings embraced more progressive postwar architectural styles. The one-story, flat-roofed concrete block Spur Distributing Company, constructed around 1950 at 101 Marigold Street on the east side of the railroad, replaced a smaller filling station. The eastern and central sections have large plate glass windows; deep eaves shelter the windows and entrances. Union Bus Station—a one-story brick-veneered Modernist building with a distinctive winged metal canopy that extends from the south elevation to shelter the bus loading area—was erected on what had been a residential lot at 401 SE. Main Street in 1951.

The main Belk-Tyler department store at 250-260 SW. Main Street was updated with an enameled metal-panel façade in the 1950s. The circa 1950 brick commercial building at 320-330 SW. Main Street—which served as Belk-Tyler's furniture store by the 1960s—has been altered as part of Station Square, but originally had a Modernist flat-roofed canopy above multiple storefronts. A high boxed cornice sheltered the plate-glass entrance curtain wall, and an intersecting projecting panel contained a square clock. Belk-Tyler's one-story brick store, erected at 225 S. Church Street in 1953, has a Modernist façade with permastone framing the plate-glass curtain wall.

Ray's Union 76 Service Center, erected in 1957 at 331 N. Church Street to sell Pure Oil products, reflects the post-World War II transformation of Church Street from a once-prestigious residential avenue into a

⁵² C. C. Stokes, "Stokes Mortuary Study List Application," 1991, on file at the State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh.

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commercial strip. The concrete block garage is veneered in porcelain-enameled steel panels and topped by a pylon to draw the attention of passing motorists.⁵³

The circa 1960 Rose Building at 132-136 Western Avenue is one of only a few Modernist office buildings in Rocky Mount's Central City Historic District. The two-story brick building has distinctive aqua panels at the cornice and beneath the large plate-glass windows on the south and east elevations.

Religious

The Central City Historic District Boundary Increase includes two Gothic Revival-style African American churches—Holy Hope Episcopal and St. John A. M. E. Zion—in the northeastern boundary expansion area. Gothic Revival features such as steeply-pitched gable roofs, pointed-arched windows, castellated towers, patterned masonry, and asymmetrical massing were widely incorporated into high-style churches and public buildings throughout the country from the late nineteenth century through the first few decades of the twentieth century. Church interiors often utilized white plaster walls as a foil for dark, robust woodwork. African American churches constructed in small towns and rural areas during the first half of the twentieth century frequently manifested elements of the late Gothic Revival style. These two Rocky Mount examples, although constructed almost fifty years apart, display common characteristics including corner towers and pointed-arch windows.

Holy Hope Episcopal Church stands at the northeast corner of Ivy Street and Albemarle Avenue. The front-gable-roofed frame building has a corner belltower with a pyramidal steeple and a cross finial, curved rafter ends, diamond-shaped windows, and a bracketed, gabled hood above the double-leaf entrance. Pointed-arch windows illuminate the weatherboarded sanctuary.

The St. John A. M. E. Zion congregation erected a new one-story brick sanctuary at the southwest corner of East Goldleaf Street and Atlantic Avenue in the late 1950s. Two stair towers flank a central recessed entrance porch. Three round arches surmount brick posts, framing the double-leaf entrance and two pointed-arch stained-glass windows. A large pointed-arch stained-glass window is centered in the façade gable; smaller pointed-arch windows illuminate the stair tower. Five brick buttresses with concrete caps delineate the six window bays on each of the side (north and south) elevations. A large pointed-arch stained-glass window occupies the third bay; pairs of pointed-arch and rectangular stained-glass windows

⁵³ Richard L. Mattson, Nash County survey file entry, 1985, on file at the State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh.

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fill the other bays. A large round stained-glass window and two small rectangular ones pierce the rear (west) elevation. The interior was completed in 1963 and remodeled after Hurricane Floyd caused extensive damage in 1999.

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10. Geographical Data

UTM References, continued

5.	Zone 18	248140 Easting	3981340 Northing	Boundary Increase
6.	Zone 18	248160 Easting	3981200 Northing	Boundary Increase
7.	Zone 18	248100 Easting	3981140 Northing	Boundary Decrease
8.	Zone 18	248060 Easting	3981010 Northing	Boundary Increase
9.	Zone 18	247940 Easting	3981060 Northing	Boundary Decrease
10.	Zone 18	247860 Easting	3980900 Northing	Boundary Increase
11.	Zone 18	247780 Easting	3980660 Northing	Boundary Increase
12.	Zone 18	247560 Easting	3980540 Northing	Boundary Increase
13.	Zone 18	247460 Easting	3980780 Northing	Boundary Increase
14.	Zone 18	247620 Easting	3980880 Northing	Boundary Decrease
15.	Zone 18	247620 Easting	3980960 Northing	Boundary Increase
16.	Zone 18	247680 Easting	3981120 Northing	Boundary Increase
17.	Zone 18	247800 Easting	3981280 Northing	Boundary Decrease
18.	Zone 18	247720 Easting	3981520 Northing	Boundary Decrease

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Central City Historic District are indicated by the bold line on the enclosed map. Areas included in the 1980 Central City Historic District boundaries but not in the revised boundaries (the boundary decrease areas) are indicated by a dashed line. Areas added to the 1980 Central City Historic District boundaries (the boundary increase areas) are indicated by a double dashed line. Scale 1" = 200'.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Central City Historic District, which includes the boundary increase areas, are drawn to encompass the greatest concentration of historic commercial and industrial buildings in the downtown area constructed during the period of significance—1877 to 1961—that contribute to the district's historic and architectural character. The area immediately outside the district is characterized by later commercial, governmental, and institutional development.

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Photograph Catalog

All photographs by Heather Fearnbach, Fearnbach History Services, Inc., 3334 Nottingham Road, Winston-Salem, NC, on September 9 and December 4, 2008. Digital images located at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office in Raleigh.

Edgecombe County

1. Commercial Buildings, 100 Block East Thomas Street, north side
2. Holy Hope Episcopal Church, Shotgun, and Duplex, 200-206 Ivy Street
3. Commercial Buildings, 107-165 SE. Main Street
4. Memorial Hospital, 224 Rose Street

Nash County

5. Commercial Buildings, 100 Block NW. Main Street (140-142 NW. Main Street, in the foreground, is noncontributing)
6. Fire Engine Company No. 2, 404 S. Church Street
7. Summerlin House, 416 S. Church Street
8. Ray's Union 76 Service Center, 331 N. Church Street